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BIBLE TRUTHS ILLUSTRATED

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tian Workers

By
J. C. FERDINAND PITTMAN

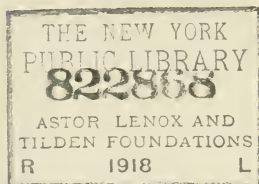


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To Preachers and Students

of

GOD'S WORD

this little work

is affectionately dedicated

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PREFACE

MY aim is to be of help to preachers, Bible-school and other Christian workers, specially in the preparation of addresses, lessons, etc.

For many years it has been my practise to make a note of anything helpful which I have heard, read, or seen. In this way, several books of illustrations have been compiled, for my own use. The matter contained in the following pages is chiefly selected from that source.

Many books of illustrations have been published from which anecdotes may be obtained to illustrate a great variety of subjects. The present effort is more limited in scope. An attempt has been made to present apt illustrations and quotations bearing chiefly upon the great fundamental truths of the religion of Jesus. I have prefaced every chapter with a little teaching upon the theme dealt with, and also striven to present unity of thought in regard to the illustrations used.

To expedite selection, the matter is classified under alphabetical headings, and indexed with cross-references at the close of the book. Where the author is known, credit is given. Original matter is not marked, whilst inverted commas indicate quotations whose authorship is unknown.

Trusting that this little work may be helpful to those who desire to make known the truth as it is in Jesus in an interesting way, it is now sent forth on its mission.

J. C. FERD. PITTMAN.

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AFFLICTION

1. Disciples of Christ should be prepared for affliction. Never should it come as a complete surprise, for God has designed (and plainly revealed this law of life to us) that, like their divine Lord, His followers should be perfected through sufferings.

Job said: "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (ch. 23:10). Jesus said: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit" (John 15:2). "In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

Thus it is seen that affliction is but a part of the divine plan. Not in anger does God send it. On the contrary, affliction is a proof of God's love, which is so intense for the highest and the best for His children, which can only be obtained by discipline.

Affliction gives the Christian a true estimate of God. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6).

It creates a sympathy for the suffering of others. He "comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction" (1 Cor. 1:4).

It tends to strengthen Christian graces. "Tribulation worketh patience," etc. (Rom. 5:3). "We often learn more under the rod that strikes us, than under the staff that comforts us" (Ps. 119:71).

It makes us feel our dependence upon God. It teaches us to prize our mercies. We must view life as a whole, and never look upon affliction apart from life's blessings. "He hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing" (Eph. 1:3).

It must ever be remembered that our light affliction is but "for a moment," and "worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17). A few more steps, and we shall be out of the woods.

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2. Trial brings man face to face with God. God and he touch; and the flimsy veil of bright cloud that hung between him and the sky is blown away—he feels that he is standing outside the earth with nothing between him and the Eternal Infinite. Oh! there is something in the sick-bed, and the aching heart, and the restlessness and the languor of shattered health, and the sorrow of affections withered, and the cold, lonely feeling of utter rawness of heart which is felt when God strikes home in earnest, that force a man to feel what is real and what is not.—*F. W. Robertson.*

3. An old Jewish proverb says: “When the tale of bricks is doubled, then comes Moses.”

4. A certain traveller who had a distance to go, one part of the road leading through green fields, and the other through a tangled road of brambles and thorns, made great preparations for the first part of his journey. He dressed himself in light and gay clothes, and put a nosegay in his bosom, and, taking a light, slender cane in his hand, nimbly proceeded on his way along the beaten path across the green meadows. The sun shone in the skies, and on went the traveller, comfortably, pleasantly, and delightfully. After awhile the road became rugged, and by the time night drew on, the traveller was in a pitiable plight. His provisions were exhausted, his clothes wet through and partly torn from his back by the briars, his flowers were faded, and, weary as he was, his slender cane could not bear his weight; a stream of water was before him, and darkness was around him. “Alas!” said he, smiting his breast, “I am hungry, and have no food; wet to the skin, and have no dry clothes; weary, and have no staff to rest on: I have a stream to cross, and here is no boat; I am bewildered, and have no guide; it is dark, and I have no lantern. Fool that I am! why did I not provide for the end of my journey as well as the beginning?” Time is hastening away. We are all travellers. Life is the beginning, death the end, of our journey.—*Biblical Museum.*

5. A philosopher once said: “I have experienced a lot of trouble in my life, but most of it has never happened.”

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6. When we approach a long tunnel, the lamps are lit. We do not know why, until the tunnel is reached, that the lamps should be lit in broad daylight. We should light our lamps, for the tunnel of trouble is coming.—*J. W. Chapman.*

7. "Men think God is destroying them because He is tuning them. The violinist screws up the key till the tense cord strikes concert pitch, but it is not to break it, but to use it tunefully, that he stretches the string on a musical rack."

8. The floods washed away all the poor man had. But after the water had subsided he saw something shining in the bank which the waters had laid bare. It was gold. The flood had beggared him, and made him rich.—*Henry Clay Trumbull.*

9. "A man was talking to John Wesley, and saying that he did not know what he could do with his perplexities. The two were passing a meadow bounded by a stone fence, over which a cow was looking. 'Do you know,' asked Wesley, 'why that cow looks over that wall?' 'No.' 'I will tell you: it is because she cannot look through it. And that is just what you must do with your troubles; look over and above them.'"

10. General Garfield, when Lincoln was assassinated, swayed the great multitudes in Washington City, when they were surging, and crying out even for revenge; waving his hand over that great crowd of maddened men, he said: "Be still, men, God still reigns." When storm-clouds lower, and difficulties rise, God still reigns.—*From a Centennial Convention Address, 1909, Pittsburgh, U. S. A.*

11. It is a dark and cloudy day for you; but you remember how, after the storm, the bow is set in the cloud for all who will look above to the Hand that smites them. The storm has come, and now we must look up, and wait and watch, in prayer and faith, for the rainbow of promise and comfort.—*Charlesworth.*

12. A minister tells about going to see a parishioner who was in deep affliction. He found her embroidering a sofa pillow-case.

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He asked her to let him take it in his hand. He purposely turned it on the wrong side, and then remarked to her that it did not seem beautiful to him, and that he wondered why she should be wasting her time upon it. "Why, sir," she replied, "you are looking at the wrong side. Turn it over." "That is just what you are doing," he replied. "You are looking at the wrong side of God's workings with you. Down here we are looking at the tangled side of God's providence; but He has a plan—here a stitch and there a movement of the shuttle—and in the end a beautiful work."—*W. R. Clark.*

13. When I was on holiday I came to the top of the high hills of Devonshire. My attention was attracted by an ant, which I watched carrying a long straw, and looking like a man carrying the longest telegraph-pole you ever saw, until it came to a crack in the rock, which was like a precipice to the tiny creature. After attempting to take its burden across in several ways, the ant got to one end of the straw and pushed it in front of him over the crack till it reached to the other side, crossed over on the straw, and then pulled it after him. There is no burden you and I carry faithfully but some day is going to become a bridge to carry us.—*William Jagoe.*

14. A jeweller gives, as one of his surest tests for diamonds, the "water test." He says: "An imitation diamond is never so brilliant as a genuine stone. If your eye is not experienced enough to detect the difference, a simple test is to place the stone under water. The imitation diamond is practically extinguished, while a genuine diamond sparkles even under water, and is distinctly visible. If you place a genuine stone beside an imitation under water, the contrast will be apparent to the least experienced eye." Many seem confident of their faith so long as they have no trials, but when the waters of sorrow overflow them, their faith loses its brilliancy; it is then that true servants of God, like Job, shine forth as genuine jewels of the king.—*Christian Age.*

15. Troubles are often the tools by which God fashions us for better things. Far up the mountain-side lies a block of granite, and says to itself: "How happy am I in my serenity—

above the winds, above the trees, almost above the flight of the birds! Here I rest, age after age, and nothing disturbs me!" Yet, what is it? It is only a bare block of granite, jutting out of the cliff, and its happiness is the happiness of death. By and by comes the miner, and with strong and repeated strokes he drills a hole in its top, and the rock says, "*What does this mean?*" Then the black powder is poured in, and, with a blast that makes the mountain echo, the block is blown asunder, and goes crashing down into the valley. Ah!" it exclaims as it falls, "*why this rending?*" Then some saws to cut and fashion it; and humbled now, and willing to be nothing, it is borne away from the mountain and conveyed to the city. Now it is chiselled and polished, till, at length, finished in beauty, by block and tackle it is raised with mighty hoistings, high in air, to be the top stone on some monument of the country's glory.—*H. W. Beecher.*

16. "Close to Bracelet Bay, Mumbles, is a bell-buoy marking a concealed rock. This bell rings only in the storm. It is only when the wind is high and the billows roll and beat against it that it gives forth the music that is in it."

17. "We are apt to believe in Providence so long as we have our own way; but if things go awry, then we think, if there is a God, He is in heaven, and not on earth. The cricket in the spring builds his little house in the meadow, and chirps for joy because all is going so well with him. But when he hears the sound of the plough a few furrows off, and the thunder of the oxen's tread, then the skies begin to look dark, and his heart fails him. The plough comes crunching along and turns his dwelling bottom side up, and as he goes rolling over and over without a home, he says, 'Oh, the foundations of the world are destroyed, and it is going to ruin!' But the husbandman who walks behind the plough, singing and whistling as he goes, does he think the foundations of the world are breaking up? Why, he does not so much as know there was any house or cricket there. He thinks of the harvest which is to follow the track of the plough: and the cricket, too, if he will but wait, will find a thousand blades of grass where there was but one before. We are like the crickets. If anything happens to overthrow *our* plans, we think all is going to ruin."

AMUSEMENTS

18. Implanted within us is a desire for amusement, the entire suppression of which is as injurious as it is unauthorised. The Christian religion is antagonistic only to that which is hurtful to spiritual life. It is not opposed to wholesome amusements. It does not rob us of any pleasures which are consistent with our eternal welfare. Healthy recreation should be encouraged, with one proviso—that it be never forgotten that there is a higher end in life than to amuse or be amused. Care should be taken, not to suppress the desire for amusement, but to moderate and rightly direct it. The limitation which devotion to Christ imposes must ever be observed, lest pleasure be made the business of life, instead of life's relaxation. "Religion does not banish mirth, but moderates and sets the rule to it."

The selection of fitting sources of amusement should not be difficult. There are many such, without tampering with questionable ones, which may prove detrimental and even destructive to spiritual life. The question requiring settlement is: "Am I, by the amusement in which I indulge, being spiritually helped or hindered? Is my soul being lifted, or more heavily weighted?"

The Christian must "use the world, as not abusing it," or, "using it to the full" (R. V. margin), remembering that "the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. 7:31). He must guard against excess, lest, like the widow of 1 Tim. 5:6, "giving herself to pleasure," he be dead even while he liveth. He should find pleasure, not only in the world's confectionery, but chiefly in the strong meat of the Word.

19. The principle is, to "use this world as not abusing it." Here Christianity stands between the worldly spirit and the narrow religious spirit. The worldly spirit says: "Time is short; take your fill: live while you can." The narrow religious spirit: "All the pleasure here is a snare and dangerous; keep out of it altogether." In opposition to this narrow spirit, Christianity says: "Use the world;" and in opposition to the worldly spirit: "Do not abuse it. All things are yours. Take them and use them; but never let them interfere with the higher life which you are called on to lead." "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth."—*F. W. Robertson.*

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20. "Men cannot live as if they were all spirit. God has given pleasure as a girdle to bind the soul for awhile to her bodily habitation."

21. To this end the Christian pleasure remains in its bloom; nay, rather, there is no end of our pleasure, for our good things have no limit. If, then, any love pleasure, let them lay hold on virtue, that they may win good things both now and hereafter.—*Chrysostom*.

22. Pleasures are to religion like breezes of air to the flame. Gentle ones will fan it, but strong ones will put it out.—*Dr. Thompson*.

23. "A ship's all right in the sea, so long as the sea is not in the ship." A Christian is all right in the world, so long as the world-spirit is not in the Christian.

24. In Rochester, New York, U. S. A., there is a little picture hanging in an art gallery which represents a young man riding very swiftly on a horse. Out in front of him is floating what seems to be an angel, holding in her hands a crown. The young man is reaching out his hands to get the crown. He is trampling under his feet flowers and helpless children. He almost touches the crown, but just one more leap of the horse and he will go over the precipice in front of him. Suppose he does reach the crown, he will have it in his hands only for a moment, and then he is lost. That is the way it is with many who are bound to have pleasure, whether they have to sin in obtaining it or not.—*C. H. Tyndall*.

25. Did you ever read of the bee in the fable, that found a pot of honey ready-made, and thought it would be fine to save all the trouble of flying about the meadows and gathering its sweet stores, little by little, out of the cups of flowers, and began to sip out of the dish? Then it went in and revelled in the sweets; but when it began to get tired and cloyed, it found—poor bee!—that its wings were all clogged and would not open, nor could it drag its body out of the mass. So it died, buried

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in pleasure. There are many persons, like this bee, that find death in their pleasures.—*Dr. Edmund*

26. What a diabolical invention was the "Virgin's Kiss," once used by the fathers of the Inquisition! The victim was pushed forward to kiss the image, when, lo, its arms enclosed him in a deadly embrace, piercing his body with a hundred hidden knives. The tempting pleasures of sin offer to the unwary just such a virgin's kiss. The sinful joys of the flesh lead, even in this world, to results most terrible, while in the world to come the daggers of remorse and despair will cut and wound beyond all remedy.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

27. "The story has been told of a soldier who was missed amid the bustle of a battle, and no one knew what had become of him, but it was known that he was not in the ranks. As soon as opportunity offered, his officer went in search of him, and, to his surprise, found that the man, during a battle, had been amusing himself in a flower garden. When it was demanded what he did there, he excused himself by saying, 'Sir, I am doing no harm.' But he was tried, convicted and shot! What a sad but true picture this is of many, who waste their time and neglect their duty, and who can give no better answer than, 'Lord, I am doing no harm!'"

ASSURANCE

28. Assurance is a feeling of certainty of one's salvation. The owner of property desires a title which the brainiest lawyer could not prove invalid. So the Christian desires personal possession of a clear title to heaven. Sure assurance is commanded. "Make your calling and election sure" (1 Pet. 1:10).

What is the ground of such confidence? It is twofold. 1. The word of God. 2. Personal consciousness. There are two joint witnesses.

"The Spirit himself beareth witness with [testifies with, through the inspired Word] our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16). Here are two witnesses—God's Spirit and our consciousness. If we have heard and obeyed the voice of the Spirit, we know that we are children of God, for the word

of the Spirit and our consciousness are in perfect agreement.

The same thought is expressed in 1 John 5:9, 10: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for the witness of God is this, that he hath borne witness concerning his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath this witness in him."

To be certain of our salvation, there must be agreement between God's witness and men's consciousness. Hence the need of obeying the voice of the Spirit.

"Hereby know we that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 John 2:3). "Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Cor. 13:5).

Such assurance throughout one's life is a guarantee that all shall be well in the death-hour.

29. You have a valuable house or farm. It is suggested that the title is not good. You employ counsel. You have the deeds examined. You search the record for mortgages, judgments, and liens. You are not satisfied until you have a certificate, signed by the great seal of the State, assuring you that the title is good. Yet how many leave their title to heaven an undecided matter! Why do you not go to the records, and find it? Give yourself no rest, day nor night, until you can read your title clear to mansions in the skies.—*T. DeWitt Talmage*.

30. Believe me, the life of grace is no dead level; it is not a fen country, a vast flat. There are mountains and there are valleys. There are tribes of Christians who live in the lowlands, like the poor Swiss of the Valais, who live between the lofty ranges of mountains in the midst of the miasma, where the air is stagnant, and fever has its lair, and the human frame grows languid and enfeebled. Such dwellers in the lowlands of unbelief are forever doubting, fearing, troubled about their interest in Christ, and tossed to and fro; but there are other believers, who, by God's grace, have climbed the mountain of full assurance and near communion; their place is with the eagle in his aerie, high aloft; they are like the strong mountaineer, who has trodden the virgin snow, who has breathed the fresh, free air of the Alpine regions, and therefore his sinews are braced, and his limbs are vigorous; these are they who do

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great exploits, being mighty men, men of renown.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

31. To depend upon feelings in religion is unsafe and dangerous. A man may as well think of holding fast to the clouds, building upon running sand, or relying on the wind. The clouds, the sand, the wind, are no more changeable and uncertain than are feelings. A change in circumstances or a change in fields will often produce an equal change in feelings. Our religion should be like the sun, cloud or no cloud, go on in its shining course; like the earth, wind or no wind, roll on in its orbits; we should "stand by faith," "live by faith," and "hold fast the profession of our faith."—*J. Bate.*

32. "Michael Faraday, the famous chemist, a man of gigantic intellect, was asked on his dying-bed, 'What are your speculations?' 'Speculations? I have none.' He could say, 'I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day' (2 Tim. 1:12)."

33. "I remember many years ago a little boy on a trundle-bed, having just retired for the night. Before going to sleep, he turned in the direction of the large bed on which his father lay, and said, 'Father, are you there?' and he answered, 'Yes, my son.' I remember that that boy turned over and went to sleep without a thought of harm. To-night that little boy is an old man of seventy, and every night before going to sleep he looks up into the face of his heavenly Father, and says, 'Father, are you there?' and the answer comes back, 'Yes, my son;' and then he asks in childish faith, 'Will you take care of me to-night?' and the answer comes back, clear and strong, 'Yes, my son.' Whom need we fear, if God our Father be with us?"

34. It is easy to know the knock of a beggar at one's door. Low, timid, hesitating, it seems to say, "I have no claim on the kindness of this house." . . . How different, on his return from school, the loud knocking, the bounding step, the joyous rush of the child into his father's presence. . . . Now, why are believers bold? Glory to God in the highest! It is to a father in God,

to an elder brother in Christ, that Faith conducts our steps in prayer; therefore, in the hour of need, bold of spirit, she raises her suppliant hands, and cries, "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, and come down."—*Guthrie*.

35. How many Christians there are who have a hope which lasts only until they need to use it! How many persons there are who are able to sustain sorrow until sorrow comes upon them! How many there are who trust in God until they have occasion to trust in Him!

Do you recollect the scene in "Don Quixote" in which the immortal knight put upon himself a helmet made of pasteboard? That helmet being smitten and pierced by a sword, he sewed it up again, and would not part with it, but in his insanity wore it, and felt that he had an all-sufficient helmet on his head. Are there not many Don Quixotes among men, who put on armour that looks very well till some sword or spear is thrust into it, but which then is found to be like the pasteboard helmet that went to pieces the moment it was touched? If we are to have a piety that shall sustain us in the flood and in the fire; if we are to have a faith that shall be an all-sufficient armour by day and by night, the year round, and from year to year—we must have one that is made up of something better than mere pasteboard instruction or a paper belief.—*H. W. Beecher*.

ATONEMENT

36. The atonement is the great central doctrine of Christianity. Amongst all religious systems, the Christian religion is unique in this—it provides a Saviour. Atonement is the distinguishing mark.

Believers in Jesus are agreed in regarding the atonement as of paramount importance. Man has, by sin, estranged himself from God; in no other way than by an atonement can he regain access into the presence of God.

To obtain at-one-ment (reconciliation to God) there must be the shedding of blood—under the old dispensation, of an animal without blemish, and under the new, of the shedding of the life-blood of Him who was typified, whose soul was to be made "an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10).

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Christ voluntarily gave Himself a sacrifice for sin. He died, not merely as a hero, a martyr, but as the world's Saviour.

Mere words fail us whenever an attempt is made to explain the atonement. It is well that the Christian world is less inclined than ever to pin its faith to theories concerning the atonement. It is recognised that the more men attempt definitions here, the less they understand.

"I cannot understand the woe that Thou wast pleased to bear,
O dying Lamb, I only know that all my hope is there."

It is enough to ponder over Scriptures relating to the atonement. "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3). "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14). "Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1 John 2:2). He (Jesus) is the Lamb "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

37. The central doctrine of Christianity is the atonement. Take that away, and you obliterate Christianity. If Christianity were merely the imitation of Christ, why, then, the imitation of any other good man—the apostle Paul or John—might become a kind of Christianity. If Christianity were merely martyrdom for truth, then, with the exception of a certain amount of degree, I see no difference between the death of Socrates and the death of Jesus Christ. But Christianity is more than this. It is the at-one-ment of the soul. It is a reconciliation which the life and death of Christ have wrought out for this world—the reconciliation of man to God, the reconciliation of man to man, the reconciliation of man to self, and the reconciliation of man to duty.—*F. W. Robertson.*

38. "If you have not found Christ crucified is the foundation of the whole volume, you have read your Bible to very little profit. Your religion is a heaven without a sun, an arch without a keystone, a compass without a needle, a clock without springs,

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a lamp without oil; it will not comfort you, nor deliver your soul from destruction."

39. What would you think if there were to be an insurrection in a hospital, and sick man should conspire with sick man, and on a certain day they should rise up and reject the doctors and nurses? There they would be—sickness and disease within, and all the help without! Yet what is a hospital compared to this fever-ridden world, which goes swinging in pain and anguish through the centuries, where men say, "We have got rid of the atonement, and we are rid of the Bible"? Yes, and you have rid yourselves of salvation.—*H. W. Beecher.*

40. A man took a photo of men stealing grapes; he went to the owner; was about to show him the plate, and found he had exposed it to the sun too long, and it had been blotted out. So God blots out sin.—*C. H. Scoville.*

41. "Many years ago I was riding through the East End of London on the top of an omnibus. A young man seated beside me said to me, 'Have you heard young Brown?' 'Yes, several times.' 'Don't you get sick of him?' 'Yes, at times, very.' 'He's always preaching about the blood.' 'And,' said Archibald Brown, 'after thirty years I'm still preaching it, and hope to preach it till I die.'"

42. A sculptor wrought a beautiful statue, and a man who saw it said: "I do not understand your statue. You can carve, I know, but your statue is all out of proportion. Can't you see it?" "You can not see it as I see it," remarked the sculptor. "You will find at the foot of the statue a place to kneel, and when you kneel at the foot of my image of Christ, you will see it in its true proportion." There are things in Christ which you can never learn or see until you have knelt at his feet.—*Harrington C. Lees.*

43. Some time ago I was holding a series of meetings in a town out West, and one night there came into the meeting a committee from a very distinguished church of our denomination. I did not know they were there. I preached on the judgment.

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They came back the next night. I did not know they were there. I preached on hell. The next night they came again, unknown to me, and I preached on the blood. Shortly afterwards this committee had a meeting. There were twenty-seven on the committee, and I got two votes; somebody else got twenty-five, and when they wrote me about it, here is what they said: "We enjoyed you, glad to have had you in our midst, but your theology has too much blood in it, and your sermon too much law. We are living to-day under love and not law." I began to make some investigations about that church, and I found that they had not received a soul on confession of faith in over three years, and I was not surprised. Men must be made to feel that there is something the matter before they can be brought to see the necessity of a Saviour.—*L. W. Broughton.*

44. "A legend tells of Eve, turned out of Eden, and sitting on a little mound just outside, feeling very despondent. Snow had lately fallen, and lay all around; an angel came to her, and taking one of the snowflakes in his hand, breathed upon it, and it turned into a white snowdrop. Then the angel told Eve that, although she had sinned, God was able to take away that sin and make her as white and pure as the snowdrop."

45. "Maltbie D. Babcock, in a meeting of ministers, told of the day when Harry Morehouse, the celebrated evangelist, was a guest in his father's house. He was waiting in his room for service-time one night, when he heard the door open, and, looking about, saw it close quickly again. He turned to his Bible, and heard the same thing repeated, and then, without turning, he said, 'Come in,' and there entered one of the children of the household, who had seen so much of Christ in the face of the preacher that she desired to know Him. And she said, 'Mr. Morehouse, I should like to be a Christian.' 'Well,' said he, in a quiet, gentle way, 'you may,' and he said: 'Will you please turn to the fifty-third of Isaiah, and read it, making it personal to yourself? Whenever the pronouns are general, make them personal.' She began: 'He hath no form . . . smitten of God, and afflicted.' When she had read thus far, she stopped, and Mr. Morehouse said, 'Go on and read it.' 'But he was wounded for my transgressions, he was bruised for my iniquities: the chas-

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tisement of *my* peace was upon him, and with his stripes *I* am healed.' She could not read further for her tears, but had caught a glimpse of her Saviour in this reading, and Mr. Morehouse said to her, 'This is what we need to do to be saved, to lay hold upon Him by faith of whom Isaiah speaks.'"

46. "Christ died *for* sin. Believers die *to* sin. Unbelievers die *in* sin."

47. At Plevna the Tsar went around his camp to cheer his men, and found an officer who had fallen asleep while writing to his wife. He described his hard work and exposure in the trenches, but said these were nothing compared to his debts. "Who will pay my debts?" he wrote; and, while brooding over them, he fell asleep. The Tsar glanced over his shoulder and read the letter, and then wrote under the question, "I will.—Alexander." When the officer awoke he saw the promise, thanked his sovereign, and went to his work with a light heart. "Who will pay sin's heavy debts for you?" Faith sees Jesus dip in His own life-blood and write the words, "I will—Jesus the crucified." Take Him at His word, thank Him for His promise, and go to do battle for Him with a light heart.

48. A great fable sometimes encloses a great truth. It is an old story of the Empress Helena, how she went to the Holy Land to find the cross. Excavations were made, and they found three crosses, but how were they to know which was the true one? So they took a corpse, and put it upon one and another, and as soon as the corpse touched the Saviour's cross it started into life. Now you are demonstrating the divinity of Christianity, and that is how you test it. It makes these dead men live.—*S. Coley*.

49. "One has imagined he saw three men kneeling at the foot of the cross. One said, as he beheld the suffering Saviour, 'May it be to me to prevent crucifixion.' He looked up, and saw a tear on the face of Him who hung there. Another said, 'May it be to me to ease crucifixion.' He looked up, and saw a frown upon the brow of Him who hung there. The third said, 'May it be to me to share crucifixion.' He looked up, and saw a smile upon the face of Christ."

BACKSLIDING

50. God willeth neither the death of the sinner, nor the downfall of the Christian. When a Christian backslides, he deliberately chooses to live on a lower plane than God desires. If a man makes shipwreck of his faith, it is not because God wills it. He deliberately shapes his own destiny, in spite of God's love, and so, like Judas, goes "to his own place."

Decline in spiritual life is, as a rule, gradual. It is not caused through some powerful assault, but comes as a result of occasional relaxation in duties regarded as small. It may be neglect of the means of grace, private devotions, or Bible study, or may result from a readiness to take offense, or a murmuring or critical spirit.

It is necessary, therefore, that the Christian should be constantly on guard against the insidious approach of evil. He should "abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22), be constant in prayer, regular at the house of God, and ever lift his eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh his help (Ps. 121:1).

The backslider should do what the Ephesian church was commanded to do: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works" (Rev. 2:5).

It must never be forgotten that God still loves the wanderer. With infinite compassion He looks upon those who have wounded themselves through sin, as a general looks with pity upon his wounded soldiers. He lovingly pleads with them to repent: "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings" (Jer. 3:22). So, "let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:7).

51. God does not predestinate man to fail. That is strikingly told in the history of Judas: "From a ministry and apostleship Judas fell, that he might go to his own place." The ministry and apostleship were that to which God had destined him. To work out that was the destiny appointed to him, as truly as to any of the other apostles. He was called, elected to that. But when he *refused* to execute that mission, the very circumstances which, by God's decree, were leading him to blessedness, hurried

him to ruin. Circumstances prepared by eternal love became the destiny which conducted him to everlasting doom. He was a predestined man—crushed by his fate. But he went to his *own* place. He had shaped his own destiny. So the ship is wrecked by the winds and waves—hurried to its fate. But the wind and waves were in truth its best friends. Rightly guided, it would have made use of them to reach the port; wrongly steered, they became the destiny which drove it on the rocks. Failure—the wreck of life—is not to be impiously traced to the will of God. God will have all men to be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth. God willeth not the death of a sinner.—*F. W. Robertson.*

52. It's mighty hard to serve God with the Devil in you: you know that by experience.—*Trotter.*

53. "The old shepherd who offered up prayer in a Welsh revival meeting described the position aptly when he lamented his backsliding in these words: 'Lord, I got among the thorns and briars, and was scratched, and torn, and bleeding. But, Lord, it is only fair to say that it was not on Thy ground; I had wandered out of Thy pasture!'"

54. "They did run well," but the fable of Atalanta became their history—a golden bait was cast in their path; they stopped to take it, and lost the race.—*Harris.*

55. In the city of Edmundstown, five young men were passing along the streets, and as they came to a corner they heard the clock strike nine. One young man stopped suddenly; the others asked why he did so, and he said: "Because I heard that clock strike nine, and I remembered my mother. She told me when I left my home in the hill country that I was going into a wicked city, but that every night at nine o'clock she would be on her knees praying." Then he said, "Boys, I am not going with you." They jeered at him, and laughed at him, but he said again, "I am not going," and he turned deliberately away from that street corner, made his way back to his room, dropped on his knees, opened his Bible, and cried out to God to save him. That boy is on his way to distinction and honor to-day in the city of

Edmundstown, while the others, without a single exception, have drifted into sin.—*J. W. Chapman.*

56. At family prayer little Mary, one evening when all was silent, looked anxiously in the face of her backsliding father, who had ceased to pray in his family, and said to him with quivering lips, "Pa, is God dead?" "No, my child. Why do you ask that?" "Why, pa, you never talk to Him now as you used to do," she replied. These words haunted the father until he was mercifully reclaimed.—*Henry T. Williams.*

57. "A Christian young man, who had fallen into the neglect of God's house and ways of worldly and fashionable conformity, called on a deacon of the church, who was a watchmaker, and asked him to repair his watch. 'What is the difficulty?' said the elder of the two. 'It has lost time lately,' said the young man. The deacon looked at him with a steady and significant look, and said, 'And haven't you lost time lately?' The words were the means of bringing the backslider back again to repentance and to duty."

BAPTISM

58. The New Testament is very clear upon the act of baptism, subjects of baptism, and the design of baptism.

The Act of Baptism.—There is but "one baptism" (Eph. 4:5). The word "baptise" is from the Greek word *baptizo*. Greek lexicons, dictionaries, and historians, with universal consent, render *baptizo* "immerse," "plunge," or "dip." But the Scriptures speak for themselves, and decide this question. They show that *baptism is in water*. "John also was baptising in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there" (John 3:23). Our Lord was baptised in the river Jordan (Matt. 3:3, 17). Philip and the eunuch "came to a certain water" (Acts 8:36). Baptism is *a burial in water*. "And they both went down into the water, and he baptised him" (Acts 8:38). "Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway from the water" (Matt. 3:16). To be Scripturally baptised one must go down into the water, and come up out of the water. He must be immersed, "buried with him through baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the

Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

The Subjects of Baptism.—Belief and repentance must precede baptism. In the great commission which Christ gave to His apostles, He said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved" (Mark 16:15, 16). Peter said, at Pentecost: "Repent ye, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38). Baptism, therefore, is for the penitent believer, not the babe.

The Design of Baptism.—Our Lord calls it a birth. "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Peter declared baptism in the name of Jesus to be for the remission of sins. Paul says that we are raised "to newness of life," and asserts that "as many of you as were baptised into Christ did put on Christ." Baptism is thus shown to be a burial in water, for the penitent believer, in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins.

For the first thirteen centuries after Christ immersion was well-nigh universally practised. Men have professed to be wiser than their Lord, and repudiated this ordinance. Remember, "He who despises an ordinance of God despises the God of the ordinance." Our Lord was baptised. Can the disciple be above his master? Instead, "every one when he is perfected shall be as his master" (Luke 6:40).

59. "It is only an ordinance!" So say many persons, when their non-observance of immersion is pointed out to them. "Only an ordinance," indeed! Strange. Why, does not an ordinance signify something *ordained, appointed, decreed*? Were it not so serious a matter, it would be quite farcical to hear individuals thus excusing themselves by virtually saying, "Oh, it is only *an ordained matter*!" Could they say, "It is *not* an ordained matter," that would be something like an excuse.

Besides, it must be remembered that such persons do not deny that it is *God's* ordination of which they are speaking, otherwise the form of their statement would be instantly changed to something like the following: "This is not a *divine* ordinance, but a *human*, therefore my conscience refuses submission to it." As it is, the excuser says, either thoughtlessly or wantonly, "*Oh! it is only* GOD'S APPOINTMENT!" What, we ask, would be thought

of the man who should thus speak of the appointments of a king? He would be considered fit for a madhouse who should coolly observe respecting a civil statute, "It's only an ordinance—only a royal command—only a decree of the Crown." Yet many seemingly sober and intelligent men thus speak of divine statutes.

"But," it may be said, "you are too hard upon us. By saying, 'It is only an ordinance,' we simply mean there is no particular blessing connected with its observance." Well, but then, how does this help the case? Are your hearts so selfish that you feel no disposition to obey a confessedly divine command, or your conscience so tampered with that you do not perceive its obligation, unless, forsooth, it has some particular advantage appended to its observance? A command *is* a command, expressive of the will and authority of him who has given it, entirely apart from any such consideration. Surely you would not wish your logic or your consciences to be comparable to those of naughty children who must be baited to school.

But, in fact, if this be the meaning of the excuse, it is simply *not true*. It is *not true* that immersion is a command without a promise, for Peter said: "Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the *gift of the Holy Spirit*."—*J. B. Rotherham*.

60. "At one of Evangelist Sweeney's meetings in America, a young lady came forward and confessed her Saviour. She was the daughter of an old German known all through the district for stubbornness. The old man was enraged, and swore that 'dose Gamellites shall not pabdize mine gall.' The next day they assembled at the water's edge; the old gent called the girl to come out and see him. An excited conversation followed—in German. The young lady told Mr. Sweeney that her father threatened to take her life if she was baptised, and the life of the one who baptised her. He said, 'They would never come out alive.' Mr. Sweeney told her to decide the case for herself. 'Can you risk it?' said the young lady. 'I can.' 'Then, so can I,' and both started down into the water, the young lady singing between her sobs, 'Jesus, I my cross have taken.' Her father stood for a moment, and then turned blubbering and crying,

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and ran with the fleetness of an antelope till clear out of sight. That father was softened in time."

61. Whilst visiting one afternoon, I called upon the wife of a deacon of the church for which I preached. Although attending the services regularly, she had not yet confessed and obeyed the Saviour. I took the opportunity of asking her whether she did not think it her duty to do so. She appeared somewhat annoyed, and said emphatically, "I will never be baptised." For some time I calmly reasoned with her, pointing out the Saviour's example and the Scriptures which teach immersion. She became very angry, and said, "Mr. Pittman, if I live to be a hundred years old, I will not be baptised." I rose and bade her good afternoon, saying, "You will live to regret having said that." The next Sunday evening, at the invitation, she came forward and confessed Christ, being immersed a few days after.

62. James Anderson, in "An Outline of My Life," makes reference to a William Black, of Cumberland, who informed him that he had asked a local preacher about baptism. The preacher said, "If you think it is right, get baptised; but if you do not think it is right, it makes no matter about it." William Black seemed inclined to accept that. He and James Anderson were passing a farmyard while William was telling him what the preacher said. There was, lying in the yard, a heap of turnips. "What are these in that heap?" asked J. Anderson. "Turnips." "Yes, if you think they are turnips, William, but, if not, just you think they are potatoes, and they will be potatoes." "Nay, nay, Jim," he said, "they will be turnips whatever you think." "Yes, William, and God commanded baptism, or He did not, whatever you think; and if He commanded it, it is right, no matter what you think; and if He did not, it is wrong, and your thinking will not alter it." "You are right, Jim," he said; "it must be as you say." "Then, Will, think it out. Did God command it, or did He not? Settle that question for yourself." He was soon baptised. His brother was in the house that night when he went home; John said, "Now, Will, you have gone and got baptised; how much are you better than I am?" "I have this advantage, at least, Jack," he replied; "I dare read all my New Testament now; you dare not."

63. In the above-named book, "An Outline of My Life," the author says that in Bathgate, England, there was a business man named Mr. Robertson, who attended his lectures. He sent for Mr. Anderson one afternoon. On arriving, he said: "Mr. Anderson, I wish to put a question to you. Do you not think that you preach far too much about baptism?" "Yes, Mr. Robertson, I think I do." "You think you do! Then, why do you not stop it?" "Because I cannot get it stopped." "You cannot get it stopped! How can that be? Explain yourself." "Oh, yes, Mr. R., I shall explain myself. You sometimes preach to people, and I am glad that you do. You tell sinners that God loves them, and Christ died for them, and you urge them to trust in Christ. I am pleased that you do all that, but you stop there; you tell them that they have only to believe, whereas Jesus said, 'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.' You leave the last part of this out, and so do most people who preach in Bathgate. Now, if I do not tell the people the rest of it, who is going to do it? I have to preach baptism for myself and you, and twenty other people in Bathgate, and that is more preaching about baptism than I wish to do. But if you will promise to say a little more about it, I shall promise you that I shall say a little less about it." Mr. R. said calmly: "I never saw your work from that point of view before. I shall say no more against your work in regard to that point."

THE BIBLE

64. The Bible is God's inspired word. When compared with the Book of books, the best of this world's literature pales into nothingness. Without the Bible, the world's history is incomplete. Little would be known of that period prior to four hundred years B. C. Without it, nothing would be known of a Saviour. It is the book of a Man, the Man of men, the peerless Son of God. It presents Him to us as our Saviour, "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). In the Old Testament the approach of Christ is gloriously predicted, but in the New He appears as our living, loving Lord. Without the Bible, men would not know how to come to Him, or to live acceptably in God's sight. "Belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). "Of his own will he brought

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us forth by the word of truth." Without the Bible, men would be in utter ignorance of the future.

The Book, and not the creeds of churches, or interpretations of commentators, should be our sole standard of appeal in religious matters. Error proceeds from man, but never from God. His word is absolutely infallible. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). The Bible should be our guide—a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path. It should be our daily meditation. "Oh how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Ps. 119:97). Let it be our comfort in sorrow, and its words shall whisper hope and peace in the death-hour.

65. One gem from this ocean is worth all the pebbles from earthly streams.—*R. Cecil.*

66. There is a Bible, because there is a God, and there is only one Bible, because there is only one God.—*Garbett.*

67. The word of God is the only source whence we may learn what conversion is and how it can be brought about. An English dictionary should help us to the commonly accepted meaning of any word in every-day use; but if we mean to be correctly informed as to what conversion is in God's employment of that term, we must turn to the usage of the word by those holy men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Modern reports of work done by various sections of professing Christians may enable us to discover what they severally understand by conversion; but it is to the Scriptures that we must have recourse, if our aim be to obtain well-grounded assurance as to what is *God*; presentation of conversion, its causes and its real ingredients. Nor need that necessity be deemed unnatural to Protestants, whose motto is, The Bible, the whole Bible, and *nothing but the Bible*.—*Alex. Brown.*

68. To me it is a very painful and humiliating fact that few books seem to be less known, even by ministers themselves, than the Book of inspiration. I have known men of very limited culture whose ministry has yet been signally owned, through a

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devotion to the Scriptures which has enabled them to meet the necessities of their congregation with an appropriateness and sufficiency even which no man of general reading ever could have secured. Truly, in us who are called to preach Jesus Christ, the word of God ought to dwell richly and abound. We ought not to stumble in our quotation of it: the Word ought to be hidden in our heart, and ought to be so precious to us as to be within instant call of our memory whenever occasion arises for its application.—*Jos. Parker.*

69. One has said, "The Bible does not need to be defended; it needs to be taught." Joseph Parker was asked for the best reply to attacks upon the Bible. "Circulation!" was the answer. C. H. Spurgeon, upon being asked if he could defend the Bible, replied: "Defend it! I would as soon defend a lion. Let it out—it can defend itself."

70. Dr. Parker once said in preaching: "And they say in Germany, this [Saul's conversion] is the result of an epileptic fit. Let us look at Saul before he went into the fit, snorting blasphemy and persecution. Together we will look at him in the fit, 'and behold, he prayeth.' And now look at him when he has come out of the fit. Saint. Hero. Missionary. Martyr." Throwing up his hands, the Doctor shouted, "Fly on, thou mighty epilepsy."

71. "At the tercentenary celebration of the publication of King James' version of the Bible in Albert Hall, London, Dr. F. B. Meyer said: 'Because it deals with sin and sorrow and human need, the Bible will last as long as man. Modern criticism has only touched the moss upon the rock, but not the rock.'"

72. In one of my early pastorates I asked one of the members of my church how she was getting along in her Christian life. She replied: "Very poorly. My life is a disgrace to me and to the church: it is a disgrace to Jesus Christ. I don't understand why it is." "Do you study your Bible every day?" I asked. "Oh, no; but I study it occasionally, when I have time." A little baby was lying in a baby-carriage near by, and I said: "Suppose you should feed that baby once in two hours to-day and once in six

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hours to-morrow, then let it go without eating at all for three or four days because you were busy, and then go back and feed it every two hours the next day, and keep up that process: do you think the child would grow?" "No," she said, "I think the child would die under that treatment." "And yet that is just the way you are treating your soul."—*W. R. Clark.*

73. "Billy Sunday once said in a sermon: 'So many church-members know nothing about the Bible. A preacher will take a text from the Bible, and get as far from it as east is from the west. A young preacher just out of the seminary said, "Must I confine myself in my preaching to the Bible?" Just like a shrimp who would say, "Must I confine my roaming to the Atlantic Ocean?" Imagine a little minnow saying, "Must I confine myself to the Atlantic Ocean?" "Must I confine myself to the Bible?" Just as if his intellect would exhaust it in two or three sermons.'"

74. Did you ever hear that story about a young Scottish probationer who was visiting an old lady who knew her Bible pretty well? I suppose he thought it was his duty to leave a text with her; so he said, before he left the room, "What a lovely promise that is, 'Lo, I am with you alway.'" She replied, "Hoot, mon, it's no a promise; it's just a fact."—*W. Hetherington.*

75. One afternoon, in the course of visitation, I called upon an old lady, ninety-two years of age; after reading to her the twenty-third Psalm, she said: "I know every word of that. I cannot see to read now, for I am nearly blind, but I learnt all those Scriptures when I was young, and now I can remember them, and I love to dwell upon the precious promises."

76. An Irishman was asked by the priest what warrant an ignorant man such as he was had for reading the Bible. He answered: "Truth, but I have a search-warrant; for it says, 'Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.'"

77. "A story is told of a minister who taught an old man in his parish to read. He proved a proficient scholar. After the

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teaching had come to an end, the minister was not able to call at the cottage for some time, and when he did he only found the wife at home. 'How's John?' said he. 'He's canny, sir,' said the wife. 'How does he get on with his reading?' 'Nicely, sir.' 'Ah! I suppose he will read his Bible very comfortably now.' 'Bible, sir! Bless you! he was out of the Bible and into the newspaper long ago.' There are many other persons who, like this old man, have long been out of the Bible and into the newspaper. They have forsaken the living waters, and have gone about among muddy pools and stagnant morasses to seek something which might slake their thirst."

78. If you are about to enter the great Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, while you are still outside in the sunshine, the guide puts a lamp into your hand. It seems useless then. But when you enter the cavern you understand the value of your little lamp, and its light is very beautiful as it shines in the dense gloom.

The lamp of Christ's comfort may seem useless to you in the happy days of youth, but sometime it will grow dark about you, and then the heavenly lamp will be most welcome.—*J. R. Miller.*

79. Sylvester Horne, at the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, held in Queen's Hall, London, in 1911, said: "It is not very long ago since a man eminent in literature in Germany at the present time said, 'The great question for all people is not what they make of the Bible, but what the Bible makes of them.' Goethe said, 'I read all books, all sacred books, but the Book stands alone, because this Book reads me.'"

80. The Bible is never so true to me *as when I am in trouble*; it is never so true to me as when I am conscious of my weakness, and of the unsatisfying nature of everything that there is in this world, and hundreds of persons learn, when brought into trouble, to esteem it and lean upon it who have despised it and thrown contempt upon it. Many a man who has cursed it has gone home from the burial of his companion or the entombing of his child disconsolate, and taken up his mother's old Book,

and dropped silent tears as he read then for the first time, with an understanding heart, its comforting messages. There is some mysterious emanation or power that finds its way to the soul in reading the Scriptures under such circumstances; and *how ill can any man afford to reject that which is such a balm in his sorest need!*—H. W. Beecher.

81. If the Bible were like a collection of stones, we might select some and put aside others, as less valuable and beautiful; and although in such selection we might make great mistakes, we should still be in possession of something more or less complete. But the Bible is like a plant, and all its parts are not mechanically or accidentally connected, but organically united, and hence a law of life rules here: and he who reveres life will neither add nor take away from the beautiful plant which the Father hath planted in and through Christ by the Spirit. . . . Nobody asserts that a man would be killed if you cut off his hair and his nails. But there is a vital union of all his members. If you cut off my little finger, I shall survive it; but it is my little finger you cut off; and it is a loss, a disfigurement. So with the Bible. It is not like a piece of cloth that you can clip and cut. It is a body, animated by one spirit.—*Adolph Saphir*.

BIGOTRY

82. Bigotry is defined as "blind and obstinate devotion to a particular creed or party"; "fanatical belief—blind zeal." One has said that bigotry consists of "a tenacious adherence to a system adopted without investigation, and defended without argument, accompanied with a malignant, intolerant spirit towards those who differ."

Here, then, is something in direct antagonism to the genius of the religion of our Lord. Detestable in nature, pernicious in influence, it should be shunned as a pestilence.

The bigot is always sure of the infallibility of his creed, and never sure of the orthodoxy of others. It can almost be said that he entertains no doubt of the heterodoxy of all, save himself and a very limited number of kindred souls. All others are blind; worse than that, they have wilfully blinded their eyes to truth, and obstinately continue in error.

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Such as these are thus charged with possessing the failures of their critic. The bigot despises in others faults of his own. He ascribes to them tenets of religious belief of which they never dreamed; he thrusts his bayonet into innocent blood, magnifies the little molehills of error into mountains of heresy, and with mistaken zeal and brute-like ferocity, though in the name of religion, persecutes those whom he should love and strive to help.

That spirit and Christianity are further apart than the poles. The religion of Christ invites earnest investigation; the calm weighing of pros and cons; the coming to an intelligent conclusion. "Be ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15).

And when a Christian considers that he has found the truth, he must keep the window of his soul open to receive more light, and, without acquiescing in error, must ever exercise towards those who differ from him a spirit of tolerance and Christian charity, without which a man becomes "sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal."

83. Nothing is more opposite to the spirit of Christianity than bigotry. This arraigns, and condemns, and executes all that do not bow down and worship the image of its idolatry. Possessing exclusive prerogative, it rejects every other claim. How many of the dead has it sentenced to eternal misery, who will shine forever as stars in the kingdom of their Father! How many living characters does it reprobate as enemies to the cross of Christ, who are placing in it all their glory!—*Buck*.

84. Some time ago, a countryman said to me: "I was extremely alarmed this morning, sir; I was going down to a lonely place, and I thought I saw a strange monster. It seemed in motion, but I could not discern its form. I didn't like to turn back, but my heart beat; and the more I looked, the more I was afraid. But as I approached I saw it was a man; and who do you think it was?" "I know not." "Oh, it was my brother John!" "Ah!" said I to myself, as he added that it was early in the morning, and very foggy, "how often do we thus mistake our Christian brethren."—*W. Jay*.

85. That the sun has spots upon his face, is a fact which everybody notices. . . . In Milner's "The Heavens and the Earth" we read the following: "Upon Scheiner, a German Jesuit, reporting the evidence of his senses to his provincial superior, the latter positively refused to believe him. 'I have read,' said he, 'Aristotle's writings from end to end many times, and I can assure you that I have nowhere found in them anything similar to what you mention. Go, my son, and tranquillise yourself; be assured that what you take for spots in the sun are the faults of your glasses, or of your eyes.'" So, brethren, we know the force of bigotry, and how men will not see what is perfectly plain to us, and how, even when facts are brought before them, they cannot be made to believe in them, but will attribute them to anything but that which is the real truth. I am afraid that the word of God itself has often been treated just in that way. Truths that are positively and plainly revealed there are stoutly denied, because they do not happen to fit in with the preconceived theories of unbelievers.—C. H. Spurgeon.

86. Mr. T— sees religion, not as a *sphere*, but as a *line*; and it is the identical line in which *he* is moving. He is like an African buffalo—sees right forward, but nothing on the right hand or the left. He would not perceive a legion of angels or of devils at the distance of ten yards on the one side or the other.—J. Foster.

CHARACTER

87. In our day, as with the Pharisees in the days of our Lord, there is with multitudes of men a desire, not so much for goodness of character, as for the reputation of goodness; not so much to be truthful, as to speak truth to obtain the praise of truth-lovers; not to do good, as to gather around admirers of their goodness. They seek a name for godliness, but deny the power thereof. To perpetuate their own names or views seems their chief anxiety. Such, after all, are but pitiful specimens of the frailty of human nature.

The true Christian concerns himself, not with semblances, but realities. He aims, not at the superficial, but at real depth of character. He is truthful and honorable; he makes a steady

and earnest effort to preserve an irreproachable character. Amid the vicissitudes of life, he preserves equanimity: nothing extraneous causes him to falter. His daily life is a uniform walk with God. He engages in practical work for his Master; lives a positive and not a negative existence. Such a man exercises a most powerful influence for good. His character ripens with the passing years, to grow to perfection when transplanted in heavenly soil. The world has never seen but one perfect character. Jesus only is "holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). May we aim to be like Him.

88. There are two sides to character; one so evil, fallen, strengthless, that at times it is on the brink of hell; and one which is risen with Christ: which brings us sometimes to the very verge of heaven: which makes us almost feel the breath of God is breathing upon us, and that we hear the harpings of the everlasting harps! The true Christian spirit is one of mingled loftiness and humility—of majesty and abasement; now with the stride of a conqueror and a king—now a captive, with the foot of a conqueror on his neck.—*F. W. Robertson.*

89. If you think you can temper yourself into manliness by sitting there over your books, it is the silliest fancy that ever tempted a young man to his ruin. You can not dream yourself into a character. You must hammer and forge yourself one.—*Froude.*

90. From the same material one man builds palaces, another hovels; one warehouses, another villas; bricks and mortar are mortar and bricks until the architect makes them something else. Thus it is that, in the same family, in the same circumstances, one man rears a stately edifice, while his brother, vacillating and incompetent, lives forever amid ruins.—*Thomas Carlyle.*

91. Be such a man, live such a life, that if every man were such a man as you, and every life a life like yours, this earth would be God's paradise.—*Phillips Brooks.*

92. We measure great men by their character, not by their success.—*Nepos.*

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93. "The biographer of Sir W. Scott writes how he bent to catch the last words of Sir Scott. 'Lockhart,' he said, 'I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man. Be virtuous; be religious; be a good man, and nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.'"

94. Happiness is not the end of life: character is. This world is not a platform where you will hear Thalberg piano-playing. It is a piano manufactory, where are dust and shavings, and boards and saws, and files and rasps, and sand-papers. The perfect instrument and music will be hereafter.—*H. W. Beecher.*

95. What you are speaks so loudly, we cannot hear what you say.—*Emerson.*

96. In South Africa, in looking for diamonds, they often find a substance that is half charcoal and half diamond. It was intended to be a diamond, but it stopped short, and it is only diamondiferous; it is partly a cinder and partly a jewel. It stopped short, and will never get into the king's crown. Don't be content to be sprinkled on one part with diamond and the other part with slag.—*W. Hetherington.*

97. "My Lord," said a poor man to a member of the English nobility, "you can do me a great service, if you will. Just let me walk up and down Regent Street with you; everybody will trust me after that."

98. We want more sermons in shoes, men and women going up and down the roads of life preaching Christianity by their imitation of Christ.—*Cuyler.*

99. The true test of religion is in the street. It lies in the common walks of life even more than in the worship of the sanctuary. . . . The test of our religion is not the religion itself, not the sympathetic manner in which we go to church, the way in which we read our Bibles, or any elaborate ritual we perform. Its test is *the kind of persons it makes us, the kind of life it produces in us.*—*Professor Oman.*

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100. Dr. Alexander Whyte says he knew a little company of students who chanced to be in a town in which there was a man in the condemned cell, waiting for his execution next day. These students fell to discussing the extraordinary question as to what minister in the town they would send for to be with them in their last moments, if any of them were in a similar predicament to the condemned man. They each took a piece of paper and wrote down the name of the man whom they would choose. After the papers were opened, it was found they had all voted for the same man. He was not a popular preacher, nor the minister of a prominent church. He held quite an insignificant and obscure position, but he had impressed all who came across him that he was a man of God. Therefore it was that these young fellows said in their hearts: "If at any time I am in need of comfort and guidance; if at any hour of my life I am crying out for God—send me such a man as he is."

101. I have generally found that a man is not much better than he looks, and if a man's outward life is not right, I shall not feel bound to believe that his inward life is acceptable to God. "Ah, sir," said one in Rowland Hill's time, "he is not exactly what I should like, but he has a good heart at bottom." The shrewd old preacher replied: "When you go to the market and buy fruit, and there are none but rotten apples on the top of the basket, you say to the market-woman, 'These are a very bad lot.' Now, if the woman replied, 'Yes, they are rather gone at top, sir, but they are better as you go down,' you would not be so silly as to believe her, but would say, 'No, no, the lower we go, the worse they will be, for the best are always put on the top.'" And so it is with men's characters: if they cannot be decent, sober, and truthful in their daily life, their inner parts are more abominable still: the deeper you pry into their secrets, the worse will be the report.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

102. A fine illustration of the worth of Christian character was seen in a teacher of one of the Government schools of Japan. His contract was that he was not to teach Christianity—not to proselyte—and, so far as words were concerned, he kept it faithfully. But all the while his life was so blameless and beautiful that it did the work without words. As evidence

of this, forty of the students, without his knowledge, met in a grove secretly, and signed a covenant to forsake idolatry—for the religion of their teacher. And some of them are now preaching the gospel in their native land.

“Be noble; and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own.”

103. “That man must have been in the army, or in a military school,” Mr. Moody said to a friend once. “Yes,” he said; “how did you know?” “By the way he walks.” In that way one can test character.

CHRIST

104. No view of Christ should be held which conflicts with Biblical statements. The Scriptures contain teaching regarding Christ so profound that its meaning is undiscoverable to human intellect. Yet men should accept all God says, in faith. All around us are mysteries which the brainiest scientists fail to explain. Is it to be wondered that, in religion, all is not easily comprehended? We must admit the truths of God’s word even though, at times, much is inexplicable to the finite mind.

“Great is the mystery of godliness.” God was manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16). Emmanuel: God with us (Matt. 1:23). “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:1-3). “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 1:9).

Christ is the centre of the Christian faith. Christianity is not based upon theories, but upon the person of its Founder, who is the embodiment of the highest and the best which humanity craves for. His life on earth was a perfect example of His own teaching. Of no other religious leader can this be said. “In Him, no inconsistency of practise neutralised the consistency of His doctrine. The one was as perfect as the other was pure.” His character was stainless, His teaching infallible, and adapted to every land and age.

Amongst the sons of men He stands alone, in unshared and unsharable sovereignty. In Him is the pre-eminence (Col. 1:18).

He is the "head over all things to the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1:22). Separate Christ from the two ordinances of the church, baptism and the Lord's Supper, and they become valueless and meaningless.

He is "the way" to God's favour, family, and immortal bliss; "the truth," infallible and unchanging, "and the life" (John 14:6). "In him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

Through Him we who were out of the way draw nigh to the Father. In Christ, our sins are put out of the way, whilst we have a seat at the King's table. In Christ, we have an elder brother, of infinite power and unfailing love. In Him, we have one who can be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities, that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

Let Him be the subject-matter and the very soul of preaching. All heralds of the cross should say with Paul: "Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

105. THE BAPTIST'S PROPHECY.—

He shall step down the centuries:
The stars dance around Him: the wide girth
Of the universe He spans, and sees,
Far off, the death of Death, the birth
Of Life unknown to heaven or earth.

He holds the sceptre of the world,
But not so that the world perceives:
Our individual lives are whirled
In eddy shoals like autumn leaves:
But each leaf in his web He weaves.

Doubt not, a goal lies far away
To which He reins the plunging team:
The backward eddies cannot stay
The onward impulse of the stream:
Clouds hide, but cannot quench the beam.

Men only catch a glimpse of Him
Before they die, and cannot know
His ways and thoughts so vast and dim.
He must increase: while all below,
I also, down to silence go.

—G. P. Pittman.

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106. Christ is "God manifest." He is the *Word*, God *heard*; the *Light*, God *seen*; the *Life*, God *felt*.—*Wolfe*.

107. In darkness there is no choice. It is light that enables us to see the difference between things; and it is Christ that gives us light.—*J. C. and A. W. Hare*.

108. We may roll the thunders of eloquence, we may dart the coruscations of genius, we may scatter the flowers of poetry, we may diffuse the light of science, we may enforce the precepts of morality, from the pulpit; but if we do not make Christ the great subject of our preaching, we have forgotten our errand, and shall do no good.—*J. A. James*.

109. Jesus Christ is the infallible standard of perfect manhood built into the temple of our humanity. In vain we search for lapse or flaw. The strongest glass does not expose a blemish. Enemies have searched his career with lamps and candles, but no profane tongue has ever whispered a suggestion against his blameless name. His character is blotless, His life spotless, His perfection has no parallel, no approach.—*Dr. McLeod*.

110. "Christ is not one of the world's great. We talk of Alexander the Great, and Napoleon the Great, but Jesus was incomparably greater than these. Yet who would speak of Jesus the Great? Jesus is apart. He is not the great. He is the only. He is simply Jesus. Nothing can add to that."

111. One of the foremost preachers of Scotland, Dr. John Kelman, once asked a well-known American scientist for his solution of the acute problems of civilisation. "An Emperor," was the answer. "We know the man," the scientist added, "and we are waiting for Him. His name is Jesus, the Christ." Dr. Kelman remarked afterwards that the thrill of that reply would never leave him.—*H. Burns*.

112. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, speaking of evangelism, says that true evangelism makes prominent the lordship of Christ, the cross of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the indwelling of

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Christ, and, I would add, the return of Christ.—*Chicago Standard*.

113. An aged sailor, who had long known the Lord, when in his dying illness he was visited by the pastor, who asked, "My friend, do you feel that you love the Lord Jesus?" said: "Oh, yes, sir, I have loved Him many years. But I can tell you something better than that—He loves me."

114. A missionary spoke of the love of God as manifested in the atonement. He addressed a young, pious negro woman with this enquiry, "Mary, is not the love of Christ wonderful?" She smilingly, yet sublimely, replied, "Massa, me no t'ink it so wonderful, 'cause it's just like Him."

115. Some years ago a woman delivered a lecture in Lancashire against Christianity, in which she declared that the Gospel narrative of the life of Christ is a "myth." One of the mill-hands who listened to her obtained leave to ask a question. "The question," said he, "I want to ask the lady is this: 'Thirty years ago I was a curse to this town, and everybody shrank from me that had any respect for himself. I often tried to do better, but could not succeed. The teetotalers got hold of me, but I broke the pledge so often that they said it was no use trying me any longer. Then the police got hold of me, and I was taken before the magistrate, and the wardens of the prison all tried me in vain. Then Christ took hold of me, touched my heart, and made me a new man. And now I am an honored and respected fellow-worker in gospel and Sunday-school work with many dear to me. And I ask, if Christ is a myth, how comes it to pass that that myth is stronger than all the others put together?'" The lady was silent. "Nay, miss," said he, "say what you will, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation."—*Anti-infidels*.

116. A despondent young man, wearied with repeated failure in his life, flung himself on a lawn near a fountain. As its jet of spray leaped into the basin, he said to himself, "That is like my life: I make good resolutions, rise for awhile from sin, and then fall back." Then he looked at a soft, fleecy, pure white

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cloud, and thought, "That was once, perhaps, dirty water, but was drawn up by the sun. Oh for a power to draw me up!" Jesus is that power. He can draw men and women out of their oft-repeated sin and failure into the sunlight of His purity.—*James D. Lawson.*

117. Archibald Brown, at the Baptist half-yearly meeting in 1915, held in Melbourne, told of a long man, a sailor, converted by the text, John 6:37, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." He said that over forty years ago he preached on that text at the East London Tabernacle; there was in his audience this sailor man, who started on a voyage the next day. The text troubled him much. One day he thought so much of it that he determined to turn to Jesus for salvation. He did so. The captain didn't know whatever was the matter with him. He said he would take his longitude and latitude when this thing happened. Several years afterwards, Mr. Brown, in the middle of a sermon, said, "Look at John 6:37." A long man rose in the middle of the audience, and said, "Here I am, sir!" It was the converted sailor. He died in Melbourne shortly before this meeting was held. When dying, the sailor said to a friend, "If ever you are within a few miles of Archibald Brown, tell him that I died trusting in John 6:37."

118. "Paint Jesus Christ upon your canvas, and then hold Him up to the people, but so hold Him up that not even your little finger shall be seen."

119. The little lad, reading some story, becomes enrapt in the fortunes of his hero. . . . How shall it end? He turns over the pages. It is all right. The hero lives and triumphs. Now the lad breathes again, and bravely faces the course of the fight once more. We, like the lad, have sometimes trembled for the fortunes of our King. Then it is good to skip the pages of time, and to look at the end. It is all right. "Alleluia, the Lord omnipotent reigneth."—*Mark G. Pearce.*

120. R. Louis Stevenson's story of the storm that caught a vessel off a rocky coast, and threatened to drive it and its passengers to destruction, is thrilling. In the midst of the terror

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one daring man, against orders, went on deck, made the dangerous passage to the pilot-house, saw the steersman lashed fast to his post, holding the wheel unwaveringly, and inch by inch turning the ship once more to sea. The pilot saw the watcher and smiled. Then the daring passenger went below and gave out a note of cheer. "I have seen the face of the pilot, and he smiled. It is all well."

121. Professor Drummond tells of a young girl whose character ripened into rare beauty. "One of the loveliest lives," he says, "that ever bloomed on earth." She always wore about her neck a little locket. But no one was allowed to open it, or to know what it contained. Once, in a time of dangerous illness, she permitted a friend to look within it, and there she saw the words, "Whom having not seen, I love"—the secret of her transformation.—*R. J. Miller.*

122. "You must crown Christ; the only question is, whether with thorns or jewels."

123. Miss Dora Yu, a famous Chinese evangelist, has said that as one starts on the narrow road that leads to life there is just room enough for two to walk side by side—Christ and the disciple; but as they go on, the road gets narrow, very narrow, until it is too narrow for two to walk side by side; then self must go and Christ alone remain, and thus the disciple learns the deeper secret of Christ dwelling within. That is it! Not Christ as a companion, but Christ as a life—our life and the life of the church.—*Bible Society Gleanings.*

124. "Wellington used to say that the presence of Napoleon was worth forty thousand troops to his army. What is Christ's presence worth to us?"

125. What can the child, on an ocean steamer caught in a storm, do to overcome the tempest? Can it drive the fierce blasts back to their northern haunts? Can its little hand hold the wheel and guide the great ship? Can its voice still the billows that crush the steamer like an eggshell? Can its breath destroy the icy coat of mail that covers all the decks? What

the child can do, is to trust the captain who has brought this same ship through a hundred storms.—*Hillis.*

126. "When Jesus rises, the storm stops. The calm comes from the power of His presence. As a strong, quiet man steps in majestically among a crowd of noisy brawlers, and his very appearance makes them ashamed, and hushes their noise, so Jesus steps in among the elements, and they are still in a moment."

CHRISTIAN

127. A Christian, according to the New Testament, is one who, having heard the gospel, believes in Christ, repents, and is baptised into His name, rising to "walk in newness of life." A Christian occupies a lofty position in Christ. The apostle terms it "the high calling" (Phil. 3:14). In his soul is being restored the image of God. Before him is the Lord Jesus, his perfect Exemplar, into whose likeness he strives to become moulded. In his hand is the rule of his life, the law of God's word, which is able to make the man of God perfect.

He has become a member of the body of Christ's church. The duty of the church is to "hold forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:16). An obligation rests upon each Christian to do his little part of the grand total of the church's work. The law of Moses consists largely of negatives. Most of the commandments commence with, "Thou shalt not." A great deal of the law of Christ is negative, but it chiefly enjoins positive duties. A Christian is called upon to refrain from evil, and actively engage himself in service for Christ. Such a life cannot be lived without encountering opposition, and experiencing many trials, yet the true Christian is undaunted amid the fiercest conflict. He measures things by the end. He sees the glitter of the unfading crown, and presses on "toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14).

128. Now see what a Christian is, drawn by the hand of Christ. He is a man on whose clear and open brow God has set the stamp of truth: one whose very eye beams bright with

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honor; in whose very look and bearing you may see freedom, manliness, veracity—a brave man, a noble man—frank, generous, true—with, it may be, many faults—whose freedom may take the form of impetuosity or rashness, but the form of meanness never. Young men! if you have been deterred from religion by its apparent feebleness and narrowness, remember—it is a manly thing to be a Christian.—*F. W. Robertson.*

129. A strong Christian is like an iceberg in a swelling sea. The waves rise and fall. Ships strain and shiver, and nod on the agitated waters. But the iceberg may be seen from afar, receiving the breakers on its snow-white sides, casting them off unmoved, and, where all else is rocking to and fro, standing stable like the everlasting hills. The cause of its steadiness is its depth. Its bulk is bedded in calm water beneath the tumult that rages on the surface. Although, like the ships, it is floating in the water, it receives and throws off the angry waves like the rocks that gird the shore. *Behold the condition and attitude of Christians!* They float in the same sea of life with other men, and bear the same buffetings; but they are not driven hither and thither, the sport of wind and water. The wave strikes them, breaks over them, and hisses past in foam; but they remain unmoved. They were not caught by surprise while they had a slight hold of the surface. The chief part of their being lies deep beyond the reach of these superficial commotions. Their life, "hid with Christ in God," bears without breaking all the strain of the storm.—*Arnot.*

130. It is always a terrible condemnation of a church-member that no one should ever suspect him of being one.—*Theodore Cuyler.*

131. "That man must have been in the army, or in a military school," Mr. Moody said to a friend once. "Yes," he said; "how do you know?" "By the way he walks." You can tell that some people have been with Jesus by their walk.

132. "A ship's all right in the sea, so long as the sea is not in the ship."

133. A lady once told the writer that she used to know a dear old Christian, a florist in St. Kilda, Melbourne, who used to go round working in gentlemen's gardens. He was a joyful old man, an earnest Christian worker, and no one would be in his company long without knowing that he was a follower of Christ. One day he went to work in the garden of a gentleman whom he knew fairly well, and after some time he said to him: "Dear brother, are you a Christian? Are you a lover of the Lord?" The gentleman replied, "Of course I am." "Praise God," said the gardener, "for that: I never should have known it if you hadn't have told me so."

134. "A Christian woman had befriended an outcast girl who was stricken with disease, and had brought her to a place where she could have nourishment and rest and comfort and love. Knowing that she had not long to live, the friend asked her whether she ever thought of God. 'It has not been hard to think of God,' was the reply, 'since I met you.' Do we make it hard, or easy, for those who are close to us to think often of God?"

135. I once asked a lady to go and speak to a woman who sat weeping about her soul. "Oh!" said the lady, "I am afraid I am not qualified for the work; please send some one else." "How long," I said, "have you been a Christian?" "Twenty years." Twenty years on the Lord's side, and not qualified to point a soul to Christ! I am afraid there will be a good many starless crowns in the glory.—*D. L. Moody.*

136. A soldier who went to the war took with him some of the small instruments of his craft—he was a watchmaker and repairer—thinking to make some extra shillings now and then while in camp. He did so. He found plenty of watches to mend, and almost forgot that he was a soldier. One day, when ordered off on some duty, he exclaimed: "Why, how can I go? I've got ten watches to mend!" Some Christians are so absorbed in self-seeking that they are ready to say to the Master's call, "I pray thee have me excused!" They are nominally soldiers of Christ, but really only watch-menders.

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137. How many clerks have sat in church and seen their employers partake of the Lord's Supper, and, knowing what they did in the store, said to themselves, "Well, if that man is a Christian, I thank God that I am not one"?—*H. W. Beecher.*

138. "One of the secretaries of the Y. M. C. A., Mr. W. Gillanders, upon returning from a trip to Korea, referred to the Koreans' knowledge of the word of God, instancing the case of a man being examined for church membership. His first exercise was to recite the Sermon on the Mount. This was not enough for the Korean examining elders. They said he should know how to practise it, as well as know it by heart. He replied: 'That is how I learnt it. I found it hard to learn, so I practised it on my heathen neighbors, bit by bit, until I knew it all. It took me three years to learn it that way.' The most miserable Christian Mr. Gillanders had seen in Korea was at a prayer-meeting. There were only nine hundred present, the night being very stormy, and this brother complained of the thinness of the meeting. They also believed in personal responsibility in evangelism. A man was not accepted into full membership until he had won one soul for Christ."

139. Gipsy Smith once asked a man in an after-meeting, "Are you a Christian?" "Yes." "How long have you been a Christian?" "Twenty-eight years, on and off." "More *off* than *on*, I guess," replied Gipsy Smith. I would rather be "out and out" than "on and off."

140. "Mr. Morgan tells of two men, nominal Christians, who worked side by side for five years before finding out, either of them, that the other one had ever made a profession of religion. One of them, in telling this to Mr. Morgan, said, 'Wasn't it funny?' 'Funny!' said Mr. Morgan; 'why, no; go find the man and let us get down before God: you never have been born again.'"

141. "At an exhibition of pictures it was discovered that a masterpiece by a famous artist was quite unnoticed because it

was poorly framed and hung in a shadowed corner very high. The man in charge reframed and rehung the picture, and then everybody acknowledged its beauty. We are to do with the Christian religion what that man did with the picture—present it in the best light and give it a chance to be known. Those who look upon church work and Christian duties as burdens to be shirked, if possible, and those who in bitterness criticise the preacher and Christian people and their work are not an example of adorning the doctrine.”

142. “The Bishop of Liverpool gave a pointed disquisition on ‘Jelly-fish Christians.’ A jelly-fish is a pretty and graceful object when it floats in the sea, contracting and expanding like a little, delicate, transparent umbrella. Yet the same jelly-fish, when cast on the shore, is a mere helpless lump, without capacity for movement, self-defence, or self-preservation. Alas! it is a vivid type of much of the religion of this day, of which the leading principle is, ‘No dogma, no distinct tenets, no positive doctrine.’ We have hundreds of jelly-fish sermons preached every year—sermons without an edge, or a point, or a corner; smooth as billiard-balls, awakening no sinner and edifying no saint. We have legions of jelly-fish young men annually turned out from universities, armed with a few scraps of second-hand philosophy, who think it a mark of cleverness and intellect to have no decided opinions about anything in religion, and to be utterly unable to make up their mind as to what is Christian truth. Their only creed is a kind of ‘nihilism.’ They are sure and positive about nothing. And last, and worst of all, we have myriads of jelly-fish worshippers—respectable church-going people who have no distinct and definite views about any point in theology. They discern not things that differ any more than color-blind people distinguish colors. They think everybody right and nobody wrong, everything true and nothing false, all sermons good and none bad, every minister sound and none unsound. They are ‘tossed to and fro,’ like children, ‘by every wind of doctrine;’ often carried away by any new excitement and sensational movement; ever ready for new things, because they have no firm grasp on the old; and utterly unable to ‘render a reason for the hope that is in them.’”

CHRISTIANITY

143. Christianity is the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles. The record of this doctrine is contained in the New Testament. Many prophecies that tell of the blessings of Christianity, and types that prefigure them, are found in the Old Testament Scriptures, but the record of Christianity is within the New Testament. Care should be taken lest the old covenant should be confounded with the new, Judaism with Christianity.

Christianity does not consist of human theories, creeds, etc., but in doctrines of unquestionable authority; "in things that are true, whether men believe them or not—in things that are to be believed and acted upon just because they are true."

Christianity is the last and greatest and most glorious revelation. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Heb. 1:1). The old dispensation shines as the twinkling stars, but Christianity as the noonday sun. Under the old covenant, the veil remained unlifted: the truths of the gospel were hidden, covered up; but now "the veil is taken away" (2 Cor. 3:16), and we are called upon to behold "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

The design of Christianity is to save fallen man; to bring the wanderers home, make provision for their needs, and prepare them for eternal residence in "the Eden above."

Too often the Christian religion is judged, not by the doctrine of the New Testament, but by the theories of uninspired teachers, and the lives of professing Christians. Care should be taken to distinguish between the "faith which was once for all delivered to the saints," and accretions to the faith—extraneous additions consisting of human speculations, or unchristlike conduct. The edifice of Christianity, as built by Christ and His apostles, needs no accretions. As workmen have, at times, covered up the ornamental designs of the interior of certain buildings with layers of whitewash, so men have covered up the doctrine of the New Testament with the whitewash of speculative theology. Our duty is plain. Occasionally, workmen have been engaged to remove the layers of whitewash, and the ornamental work has

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been revealed in its original beauty. We must endeavor to tear away everything extraneous, that the faith of the early church may once more be clearly revealed in its original simplicity and beauty.

144. Detach Christianity from Christ, and it vanishes before our eyes into intellectual vapor. Christianity is non-existent apart from Christ; it centres in Christ; it radiates now, as at the first, from Christ. It perishes outright when men attempt to abstract it from the living person of its Founder.—*Canon Liddon*.

145. Judge not Christianity, even by its most perfect embodiment in the life of its disciples here. Do not judge the science of that organ-builder by that half-finished instrument in his workshop. There is but little in that to please the eye, and from it scarce a note can be evolved to charm the ear. Judge the organ-builder by the instrument as it stands in the great cathedral, pouring forth, by the touch of a master musician, pealing strains of music, electrifying the congregated thousands. Even so judge Christianity. Its organ is not half finished here in its workshop. Yonder, in the great cathedral of eternity, you will see it in perfection, and feel the inspirations of its harmonies.—*Dr. Thomas*.

146. I willingly believe the witnesses who let their throats be cut to attest the truth of what they believe.—*Pascal*.

147. "I met a man who asked me where I was going. 'To the prayer-meeting,' I said. 'The Christian religion is a mere notion,' he replied. Said I: 'Stranger, you see that tavern over there? The time was, as everybody in this town knows, that if I had a shilling in my pocket I could not pass that tavern without going and getting a drink. But God has changed my heart, and the Lord Jesus has destroyed my thirst for strong drink. There is my whole week's wages, and I have no temptation to go in there. Stranger, if this is a notion, I want to tell you it is a mighty powerful notion; it is a notion that has put clothes on my children's backs, good food on our table, and has filled my mouth with thanksgiving to God.'"

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148. Voltaire said: "I despair of destroying religion while millions meet together for worship on the first day of the week."

149. We are told in the *Spectator* that when Sir Roger de Coverley first came to his estate, the good knight found three parts of his house altogether useless. The best room had the reputation of being haunted; noises had been heard in another, and his mother had had several chambers shut up, in which deaths, or other disagreeable events, had occurred. In this manner his habitation was reduced to so small a compass that he found himself almost shut out of his own house. This story presents itself to my mind when I see men, without sufficient reason, abandoning part of their rightful possession of Christian doctrine, and confining themselves to a narrow range of Scripture truth. . . . We must maintain the truth as we have received it, and trust to Him who is "the Truth" to prosper and defend it.—*Archbishop Whately*.

THE CHURCH

150. The church of God is a New Testament institution, founded and established by Jesus Christ. This we learn from his words recorded in Matt. 16: 18: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." His apostles were his chosen agents for this work, who were infallibly guided by the Holy Spirit. From the day of Pentecost onward we find the church in actual existence. All that we know of the church as a divine institution is found in the New Testament.

The word "church" is from a word which means "a called-out assembly," and it is therefore correctly described as "a congregation of faithful men." As we trace it in the New Testament, we see it to be an assembly of the faithful followers of Jesus Christ, meeting together regularly in any given place; and steadfastly following the teaching of the apostles; helping one another, both spiritually and materially; observing the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week and uniting together in prayer and thanksgiving. (See Acts 2: 42.)

Elders or bishops were appointed to provide spiritual food for the flock (1 Pet. 5: 1-4); and deacons to attend to its physical

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needs (Acts 6:1-6). All the members were expected to take some part in the edification of the church (1 Cor. 14).

The reason of the church's existence is to glorify God by its holy life and good works, to win the world to Christ, and to mutually edify one another for the higher life to come.

The church is God's greatest work on earth, and is most precious in His sight; having been purchased with the precious blood of His dear Son (Acts 20:28). The human body, also the wonderful work of God, is used as a fitting symbol of the church's unity, symmetrical beauty, and mutual helpfulness (1 Cor. 14). The chaste virgin bride is used as a symbol of the church in the eyes of Christ, and of her devotion to Him. As "God's building" it is founded upon a "rock" that can never be moved.

151. Legislation for the church of God was perfected ere the apostles fell asleep in Jesus! He had prayed that they might not be taken out of the world, but preserved from its evil. The churches they set in order were designed as models till the end of the age—not in the defects and sins of their members, but in the faith and polity established by the apostles. To this end they have left us imperishable documents, as the only standard of appeal. The voice from the excellent glory had proclaimed: *"This is my beloved Son; hear ye him."* He had duly instructed His apostles, when, just before the traitor-led throng hurried Him away, He lifted up His voice to heaven and said: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17:18). To them He said: "As my Father sent me, even so send I you; he that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." Till the day of Pentecost, as He commanded, the apostles remained waiting, praying, for the promised bestowal of power. But when thus endowed with the Spirit, they gave laws to the Israel of God. The three thousand sinners who yielded to Jesus and were born again, were organised, with others, as the church in Jerusalem, the first planted of the churches of Christ. Many churches were subsequently planted, and were the one body, ordered and governed by the apostles. Thus, their apostleship being not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus the Christ and God the Father, they could do nothing against the truth, but

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for the truth, speaking with the demonstration of the Spirit, and in power, not in the words that man's wisdom teaches, but in words by the Holy Spirit, they were enabled to say: "He that is of God heareth God's words." "God beareth them witness both with signs and wonders and divers miracles and gifts" (Heb. 2:4).—*David King.*

152. To effectually destroy a church, you must:

"1. *Discourage the preacher.* Absent yourself from one service every Sunday, or miss at least one in three; if he is not very strong, once in four times may answer. Neglect the prayer-meeting. Criticise your preacher freely; praise him sparingly; find fault plentifully; pray for him little or none. If he proposes to hold extra meetings, withhold your co-operation. Give yourself no concern whether his salary is paid or not. Never call on him socially, or allow him to think that his comfort, or that of his family, is a matter of any importance in your eyes.

"2. *Discourage your fellow-members.* Observe the directions given above. Complain about everything they do and don't do. Contrive to make yourself the head of a clique, and by their assistance and your own industry keep the church in hot water generally. While doing this, lose no opportunity to complain of the bad treatment *you* are receiving. Be as much like Diotrephes and as little like Paul as you can. Discard charity and candour, take distrust into your bosom, and make scheming your specialty.

"3. *Destroy the confidence of the community.* Observe the foregoing directions. Tell the people that you are in the church by force of circumstances, but have no respect for the way in which business is conducted. Publish the faults of your brethren, taking care to magnify them; make no effort to induce people to attend the church. Take no part in the labors of the Sunday school. Publish it on all occasions that you have no confidence in the concern. Predict that it must fail—go down—blow up—never can succeed. By observing these directions faithfully, you will have the satisfaction, if the church is not unusually vigorous, of witnessing the fulfilment of your predictions."

153. Some years ago I was living in a town where a Church of England preacher conducted a mission. He asserted that his

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church was the only one in the line of apostolic succession. The Presbyterian preacher took exception to that statement, and became equally positive in the declaration that his church had the best right to that position. A vigorous discussion upon the subject was carried on in the daily paper. But I have never forgotten that these preachers made no appeal to the word of God. All their ammunition was obtained from church Fathers, uninspired records, and such authorities. To have the church in existence as it was in the New Testament, it is not at all necessary—even if it were possible—to trace the existence of somebody, in an unbroken line, back through all the jungles of error, superstition, and corruption, to the days of the apostles. Listen! *All that is necessary to the existence of that church is APOSTOLIC PRACTICE.*—*H. G. Harward.*

154. "An architect complains that many of his clients come and ask him to design a house for them, only to let him very speedily discover that they have already designed it for themselves. What they really want is the sanction of their own plan, and the satisfaction of seeing him draw on paper what they have fully in mind." So, instead of doing all things according to the pattern shown us, many prefer their own plans, and build their own churches.

155. A negro tried to get into a fashionable church in America, but was not wanted. He consulted the pastor, who advised him to pray about it. Some time after the minister met the negro, and enquired what answer he had received. The negro said: "The Lord told me He had been trying to get into that church Himself for the last two years, but couldn't, so you mustn't expect to get in."

156. The church is the only institution that puts its arms around all humanity, and has upon its door "Whosoever will may come."—*C. R. Scoville.*

157. "Is it a strong church?" asked a man, respecting a body of worshippers. "Yes," was the reply. "How many members are there?" "Seventy-six." "Seventy-six! Are they so very wealthy?" "No; they are poor." "How, then, do you say it

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is a strong church?" "Because," was the reply, "they are earnest, devoted, at peace, loving each other, and striving to do the Master's work. Such a congregation is strong, whether composed of five or five hundred members."

158. I once saw a picture of a man who grasped the hilt of his sword. The blade was broken. The other hand held fast the great iron ring of the church door, while his eyes were turned with a look of terror towards the direction whence he came. He was being hunted to the death, and he was seeking sanctuary. He was there at the place of refuge; but the door was shut. And when I looked at that beautiful picture I thought of those harassed souls who have gone to the house of God, tired and broken, weary and pursued, only to find there was no protection, no comfort, no gateway leading to the peace of God.—*H. A. Proctor.*

159. At the White City, London, soon after the war with Germany broke out, and when a strenuous recruiting campaign was in progress, they placed a great hand at the entrance, stretched out as if to welcome volunteers. So, at the door of the church can be seen the outstretched hand of our Lord Jesus, ready to give the grip of welcome to all who volunteer for His service.

160. I remember, one October morning, walking across an old, smoke-begrimed bridge that spans the Ohio at Cincinnati. My eye was caught by a dingy sign in large, plain letters nailed up in a prominent place. It simply said: "Processions, in crossing this bridge, must break step." That was all. But it was imperative. It was a law. The procession *must* break step. The same men might cross the bridge, in as large numbers, at the same time, but they must not keep step. The authorities knew perfectly well that for a body of men to march *in step*, every left foot set down at once, the impact of every right foot striking at the same moment, would so—I do not say *add* to the force exerted—would so *multiply* the force exerted upon the bridge as to endanger its safety. The power of concerted action is immense beyond any power of conception. Every bit of power at command can so be brought to bear at one point with a force

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beyond any words to express. Our Master reversed for us the old bridge sign. Out from Pentecost rings this word: "Let my followers all form in line, close ranks, and move out to a world conquest, and—*keep step*." That command of His will make a winning force so great as to shorten up the world's present calendars, and shorten up the world's pain, and lengthen out the new life that will come to untold numbers through Jesus.—*S. D. Gordon*.

161. "Well, have you come to serve God?" asked a deacon of a Christian man as he entered the porch of the house of God. "No," he replied, "I have been serving God all the week; I come to worship Him."

162. We need to-day an S. S. S. S.—a "Society for the Suppression of Superfluous Societies." The church, and the church only, will win the world for Christ. "It is the whole business of the whole church to win the whole world for Jesus."
—*F. T. Saunders*.

163. Dr. Lyman Beecher, upon being asked how he did so much in his church, answered: "Oh, I preach Sundays, and four hundred of my church-members preach every day." That is how he could do so much, and why his church was such a factor for good in Boston in his day.

164. An old sea-captain was riding in the cars towards Philadelphia, and a young man sat down beside him. He said: "Young man, where are you going?" "I am going to Philadelphia to live," replied the young man. "Have you letters of introduction?" asked the old captain. "Yes," said the young man, and he pulled some of them out. "Well," said the old sea-captain, "haven't you a church certificate?" "Oh, yes," replied the young man; "I didn't suppose you would want to look at that." "Yes," said the sea-captain, "I want to see that. As soon as you get to Philadelphia, present that to some Christian church. I am an old sailor, and I have been up and down the world, and it's my rule, as soon as I get into port, to *fasten my ship fore and aft* to the wharf, although it may cost a little wharfage, rather than

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have my ship out in the stream, floating hither and thither with the tide."—*Talmage*.

165. Christ has but one church. The second Adam, like the first, is the husband only of one wife. Just as the church cannot have two heads, so the one Head cannot have two bodies; for, as that body were a monster which had two heads, so the head which had two separate bodies.—*Dr. Guthrie*.

166. Any physician will tell you if there be fever in the body, if the pulse be 120 instead of 70 or 80, the body will waste and pine away. If there be the fever of ceaseless quarrels and disputations about little crotchets in a church or congregation, instead of growing it will decline; instead of advancing in its majestic mission it will positively decay, until it die out, a suicide, having turned the weapons that ought to have been combined against the foe, against its own bosom and into its own heart.—*Dr. Cumming*.

167. Nearly forty years ago David Livingstone, one of the great world-winning pioneers, was lost in the depths of equatorial Africa. . . . Everybody was talking about the lost leader. James Gordon Bennett, the owner of the New York *Herald*, sent a telegram to one of its correspondents, Henry M. Stanley. Bennett was in Paris, and Stanley at Gibraltar. The telegram summoned Stanley to come to Paris at once. Stanley went, reached Paris at midnight, knocked at the great newspaper man's door, and asked what was wanted. "Find Livingstone," was the short, blunt reply. "How much money do you place at my disposal?" asked Stanley. "Fifty thousand dollars, or a larger sum. Never mind about the money; find Livingstone." Stanley went. It took two years' time to get ready. It required a specially planned campaign and thorough preparation. This planning was done, and the world was thrilled when the bold missionary was found. Our Master has sent a message to His church. It is written down in a Book, and is being repeated by wireless messages constantly. He says: "Find my world, and bring it back; never mind about the expense of money and lives. *Find my world, and bring it back.*" And the church has the power to do it.—*S. D. Gordon*.

CONDITIONS OF SALVATION

168. By virtue of the death of Christ, God saves unconditionally those who cannot obey conditions. "He is the Saviour of all men, specially of those who believe" (1 Tim. 4:10). Thus, in the great scheme of human salvation, the millions of infants, for instance, who die before they are old enough to believe, are made eternally secure. But to all who are able to obey or disobey, the gospel is to be offered on certain conditions. The gospel itself is the glad news of the death of Christ as an atonement for sin and His resurrection from the dead for our justification. It is God's unspeakable gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, presented to all mankind for their hearty, loving acceptance, "without money and without price." It is absolutely free, and unmerited by us to whom it is offered. It must be so, "for all have sinned and come short of God's glory." As a free, unmerited gift of God, then, we must receive it.

"Nothing in my hands I bring:
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

But while we must clearly understand that salvation is a gift of God, we must also understand that God requires us to "obey the gospel" in making it our own. By disobedience man fell, and by obedience he is restored. Hence the "gospel . . . is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:26).

By the teaching of the apostles and the example of conversion, found in the New Testament, we find the obedience to be: first, faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and our Saviour; second, repentance; and third, baptism (Acts 16:31; 2:38). The last of these conditions is an act full of significance. The apostle Paul, in Romans 6, says it is a burial and resurrection. This includes the act of baptism and its spiritual import. It sets forth in a figure the faith of the mind and the repentance of the heart. It is doubtless for this reason that it is appointed. God intends that it should be a testimony to the world of the purpose of the heart to forsake the world and its sinful pleasures, and live henceforth to the honour and glory of God.

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169. This is a crucial subject—this giving of a place for man's will to be exercised. Whatever gospel theme we may take up, we always find, in examining the whole of what the New Testament says about it, a place where the perfect provision made by God may be rejected by man, by the very creature for whom that provision has been made! "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life," sorrowfully said He who came to give life. "Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles," said Paul to the jealous Jews at Antioch of Pisidia. It is, indeed, a theme to give us pause, the most awful and the most splendid fact in human life, that after man's ill-use of his freedom of will has brought ruin and shame, even God's power to save—the gospel—*can be refused by him*. Well might Phillips Brooks exclaim, "'He came unto his own, and his own received him not;' these words are an assertion of the *awful ultimateness* of the power of free will in man."—*Lancelot Oliver*.

170. Beware of the damnable doctrine that it is easy to enter the Kingdom. It is to be obtained only by the sacrifice of all that stands in the way, and it is to be observed that in this, as in other things, men will take the first, the second, the third—nay, even the ninety-ninth—step, but the hundredth and last they will not take.—*Mark Rutherford*.

171. At a mission meeting, connected with the Chapman-Alexander campaign in Melbourne, Mr. F. C. Spurr, in giving instructions concerning conversion, said: "Stand still; consider; turn round; go on."

172. "A man once wrote: 'I regret the word "do" is in the Bible. "Only believe" is the true doctrine.' But the word 'do' is there, and God put it there, and to extract it is wicked. 'Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?' (Luke 6:46)."

173. "Sometimes a man will buy a piece of machinery that he has need of. The machinery is shipped to him by express and comes in a crate. Each part is separate and carefully packed. When all the various bits of metal are laid out upon the floor,

they present such a disordered sight that he wonders if they can ever be put together so that the thing will 'run.' Now, if you were that man, and were confronted with all those 'parts,' and knew that there was some way for them all to be fitted together so that they would make a smooth-running machine, you would not try to put them together without looking for directions. This human life of ours is a very complicated machine, but it is made so that if we follow the Maker's directions it will go together nicely and run smoothly."

174. Across the river Zambesi, below Victoria Falls, is a bridge spanning the widest chasm and overlooking the most terrible turmoil of waters to be seen on any river in the world. That bridge was made by building out an arm from either shore, and uniting the two outstretched arms in the centre over the roaring stream; neither could have reached the opposite bank by itself; the two were needed to meet each other. Penitence and pardon form the bridge across the tumultuous stream and those stupendous falls which seem to separate the soul from God. Pardon without penitence is impossible, and penitence without pardon is useless.—*R. F. Horton.*

175. The gateway of the city of refuge was probably always attended, night and day, by men whose duty it was to receive and take care of fugitives. One would not be left outside pleading for admittance; the "latch" was on his side of the gate. A man once stopped a preacher in a street in London, and said: "I once heard you preach in Paris, and you said something which I have never forgotten, and which has, through God, been the means of my conversion." "What was that?" said the preacher. "It was that the latch was on our side of the door. I always had thought that God was a hard God, and that we must do something to propitiate Him. It was a new thought to me that He was waiting for me to open to Him."—*W. T. Dorward.*

176. To show the fallibility of man's directions, and the need of doing as God instructs, Mr. W. A. Sunday tells the following story: "I was going West one time. The train had two engines ploughing along. There was a woman, with a little baby in her arms, who wanted to leave the train at a certain little station,

where they will stop the train if you come from a certain distance. The brakeman came in and called the name of the station, when we were getting near. The woman said, 'Don't forget me,' and he replied, 'Sure.' There was a man there who said, 'Lady, I will see that the brakeman don't forget you; don't worry.' Awhile later he said, 'Here's your station.' She hopped out of the train, into the storm. . . . The train had gone on about three-quarters of an hour, when the brakeman came in and said, 'Where's that woman?' The man said, 'She got off.' The brakeman said, 'Then she's gone to her death; we only stopped the train yonder because there was something the matter with the engine.' They called for volunteers, and went back and looked for her. They found her after searching for hours, out on the prairies, covered with a shroud of ice and snow woven about her by the pitiless storm, and with the little babe folded to her heart. She followed the man's directions, but they *were wrong*. That is the way that preachers of false doctrine are robbing people of God."

CONFESSION

177. Confession of sin is a Christian duty. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). "Confess therefore your sins one to another" (Jas. 5:16). Catholics quote the latter text as authority for auricular confession; but there is no mention of a priest here. Those written to were exhorted to acknowledge their sins one to another. The true disciple is ever ready to confess his sins. He does not climb upon a hilltop to proclaim his goodness, but bends low in the dust, and cries, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

The "good confession" is required to be made by penitent believers who accept Christ as their Saviour. Paul wrote: "I charge thee in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession" (1 Tim. 6:13). It is recorded that the high priest asked Jesus, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" and Jesus said, "I am." Later, Pilate asked our Lord, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" and He answered, "Thou sayest" (Mark 14:61, 62; 15:2). Jesus thus declares Himself to be "the

Christ, the Son of the Blessed." When our Lord said to His disciples, at Cæsarea Philippi, "Who say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16: 15, 16). The early converts made this confession: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10: 9, 10).

So that "the good confession" is a confession, not of belief in a creed or dogma, but a person. The confessor, feeling his absolute need of Christ, confesses faith in Him as "the Christ, the Son of the living God." By so doing he exalts the Saviour. He calls attention, not to himself, but to his Lord and Redeemer. Never does the soul attain to loftier heights than when he bends at the feet of Jesus and vows allegiance to Him.

This confession is "unto salvation." It follows, therefore, that those who cannot believe and confess (infants) and those who will not (unbelievers) are ineligible for church membership. Confessing Christ, the penitent believer is baptised into the name of Him whom he has confessed, to be introduced into the Kingdom of our Lord, and "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 4).

178. The only apostolic and divine confession of faith which God, the Father of all, has laid for the church, and that on which Jesus Himself said He would build it, is the sublime and supreme proposition: *That Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.* This is the peculiarity of the Christian system; its specific attribute. . . . There is no other confession of faith on which the church can be built, on which it can possibly stand one and undivided, but on this one. With the heart man believes this proposition in order to justification: and with the mouth he maketh this confession of it in order to his salvation. So Paul explains it (Rom. 10: 10).—*Alex. Campbell.*

179. There are too many professors and too few confessors in the world. A mere professor is an apostle in embryo; a true confessor is the germ of a martyr. To Immanuel's ensign! all ye of faith and daring.

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We must become confessors before we become proclaimers. Thus did Jesus, thus His apostles, thus their converts, and thus must we. Shall we involve ourselves in the inconsistency of proclaiming to others what we have not ourselves embraced?

The object of the proclaimer is to gain confessors. Hence, the enquiry now urged, Have you faith? If so, be entreated to make confession. Are there not near you at least a few faithful men, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, keeping the ordinances as delivered at the first? If so, your duty is plain. Find up these Christians, and, having done so, gladden their hearts by confessing their Lord to be now and henceforth yours.—*J. B. Rotherham.*

180. "To be free from human tyranny, we must be the subjects of divine authority. The good confession, as of old, stands as the stalwart guardian at the door of the church."

181. We owe it to Christ thus to confess Him. . . . In one of his wars Cyrus took captive an Armenian princess. She was condemned to death. Hearing of this, her husband came into the camp of his conqueror and offered his life in her stead. Cyrus was so touched with the devotion of the prince that he resolved to pardon them both, and to restore them to their dominion. Officers and soldiers stood there talking over the magnanimity of their great leader. The princess was near by, her eyes filled with tears. Some one turned to her with the question, "What do you think of Cyrus?" "I was not thinking of Cyrus," was her reply. "Of whom, then, were you thinking?" And, looking up into the face of her husband, her eyes luminous with love, she answered: "I was thinking of the one who would willingly have died for me." Because of all He has done for you, you ought to confess Christ.—*H. G. Harward.*

182. A friend of mine, who used to live across the sea, told me that his father lived on the estate of an English nobleman, a man of high standing, and a great friend of the late Queen of England. This titled gentleman was not strong of constitution, and, although the food upon his table would tempt a king, he could not partake of it. But he would slip away to a little house where dwelt an old woman, a saint of God, by the name

of Betty. Betty had known this nobleman from the days of her youth, and she loved him. She knew his illness, and she baked for him a peculiar little oat cake, which the nobleman would eat at her house, and which he said prolonged his life. One day the Queen came to visit this nobleman, and while she was staying at his house, he went down to this old-fashioned woman and said, "Betty, Her Majesty, the Queen, is at the palace to-day, and I would like you to come up and see her this evening." You may well believe it was a day of excitement for Betty. She went through all her boxes, and put on the best garments she had. Then she took a little, old-fashioned shawl, which she pinned down over her head, and made her way up to the great house. When she appeared at the door, the servant looked at her, and said, "What is it?" and Betty said, "I want to come in." "But you can't come in," said the man. "The house is full of guests, and the Queen is here. The master cannot see you now." Old Betty stood there a moment, then she said, "But he telt me to come." The servant was not easily persuaded, but finally he went and saw the master of the house, and he was told to admit the woman.

They brought her into the drawing-room, and the nobleman led her over to the Queen, and said: "This is Betty. She has helped to keep me alive, and I thought I would like to have her see you." Old Betty dropped on her knees, and was almost ready to kiss the hem of the Queen's dress. Then she withdrew, and when she came to the man at the door, she looked up into his face and said, with a good deal of snap, "I telt you he telt me to come." My blessed Saviour told me if I was weak, He would give me strength; if I had doubts, He would banish them; if I would confess my sins, He would pardon them. I believe Him. He told me to come, and so I came.—*J. W. Chapman.*

183. What doth God require, by a free profession of His truth, more than a master doth of his servant when he bids him take his livery, and follow him in the street? or when a prince calls his subjects into the field, to declare their loyalty by owning his quarrel against an invading enemy? And is it reasonable, what man requires of these, and only hard from God's hands?—*Gurnall.*

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184. Sometime ago when in a mine, looking through its dark corridors, I every now and then saw the glimmer of a moving lamp, and I could track it all through the mine. The reason was that the miner carried it on his hat; it was a part of himself, and it showed where he went. I said: "Would that in this dark world every miner of the Master carried his lamp to show where he walks."—*Cuyler*.

185. I have no notion of a timid, disingenuous profession of Christ. Such professors are like a rat playing at hide-and-seek behind a wainscot, who puts his head through a hole to see if the coast is clear, and ventures out if nobody is in the way, but slinks back again when danger appears. We cannot be honest to Christ except we are bold for Him. He is either worth *all* we can lose for Him, or He is worth nothing.—*Salter*.

186. If people are loud in the praise of the physician who has cured them, recommending others to trust his skill, why should not Christ's people crown Him with equal honors, commend Him to a dying world, and proclaim what He has done for them? Let them say with David, "Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," and tread in the steps of the Samaritan who threw away her pitcher, and, running to the city, brought them all out, crying: "Come, see a man who hath told me all things that I have ever done."

It is a bad thing ostentatiously to parade religion, but it is a base thing for a Christian man to be ashamed of it: not to stand by his colours; by his silence, if not his speech, to deny his Master; to sneak away, like a coward, out of the fight.—*Guthrie*.

CONSCIENCE

187. Conscience, unaided by divine revelation, is no guide. Paul said, in the presence of the council: "I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day" (Acts 23:1). In all good conscience! and yet persecuting, imprisoning, and putting to death the saints of God. His conscience, in earlier life, approved such conduct, but now disapproves all antagonism to the religion of Jesus. Upon hearing the divine voice as he journeyed to Damascus, he saw the error of his way, and

repented. To the word of the Lord all should hearken, lest they sin against Him, whilst living "before him in all good conscience."

"Conscience, without a divine light, is like a dial without the sun, a shade, a blank, a useless instrument." "Conscience is a Latin word (though with an English termination), and, according to the very notation of it, imports a double or joint knowledge, one of a divine law or rule, and the other of a man's own action; and so is properly the application of a general law to a particular instance of practise." It is to be regretted that so many look to conscience to be its own guide, instead of educating conscience in the divine law. Revelation alone can be relied upon. If conscience speaks upon its own authority, men should turn a deaf ear to its voice.

188. Conscience, of itself alone, is not a sufficient guide for life. Every night, set in the front of the locomotive as it dashes on through the darkness, gleam the rays of the headlight, piercing the gloom for a mile ahead. So, say many, man is himself luminous. Surround him with whatever darkness, and at once it is pierced and thrust aside by a blaze of inherent radiance. But neither Scripture nor experience sustains such notion.

Conscience does not possess the power of origination. It cannot make right right, or wrong wrong. It is only our power of recognising the distinction already made, and as eternal as the heavens. And, just as a blind eye cannot distinguish between night and day; just as a guide-board wrongly written may send the wearied and famished traveller from the warmth and help of home, so may a blinded, misinformed conscience lead toward wrong instead of toward the right.—*Wayland Holt*.

189. "The iron of which steamers are built has a powerful influence in deflecting the needle of the compass, so that it no longer points to the north. In some cases the deflection is more, in others less. They therefore have to take the steamer into a quiet lake where the points of the compass are clearly marked on the shore. The ship is then placed in an accurate position north and south, and the size of the angle of deflection is easily ascertained and allowed for. So, from time to time, conscience has to be taken into the calm lake of God's word.

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that all deflections that are caused by our contact with this world may be accurately ascertained and rectified."

190. That grand old bell in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, is seldom heard by many during the business hours of the day. The roar and din of traffic in the streets have a strange power to deaden its sound and prevent men hearing it. But when the daily work is over, the desks are locked, and doors are closed, and books are put away, and quiet reigns in the great city, the case is altered. As the old bell strikes eleven, and twelve, and one, and two, and three at night, thousands hear it who never heard it during the day. And so I hope it will be with many a one in the matter of his soul. Now, while in health and strength, in the hurry and whirl of business, I fear the voice of your conscience is often stifled and you cannot hear it. But the day may come when the great bell of conscience will make itself heard, whether you like it or not. Laid aside in quietness, and obliged by illness to sit still, you may be forced to look within and consider your soul's concern.—*Bishop Ryle*.

191. In times when vile men held the high places of the land, a roll of drums was employed to drown the martyr's voice, lest the testimony of truth from the scaffold should reach the ears of the people—an illustration of how men deal with conscience, and seek to put to silence its truth-telling voice.—*Arnot*.

192. In Pennsylvania, America, there is a woman who won't allow her children to play with doll-babies. She says it is so much like worshipping graven images. But there was a still more remarkable case of conscientiousness in Boston, where a man stole a horse on Saturday night, and on Monday morning the police found him very near where he had stolen the horse on Saturday night, and they said: "How is it you did not get away yesterday? You had all day on Sunday to get away, and have not done it." The man replied: "Oh, I must let you understand that I have conscientious scruples about travelling on Sunday."—*Talmage*.

193. In returning from some of the apartments in a lunatic asylum in Philadelphia, Mr. H. W. Beecher saw a man standing

fixed, immovable, like a pillar. In recording the scene, he said: "I asked who that was, so fixed, the image of despair. It was the son of Dr. Rush, and in the dreadful hour of revenge and pride he had killed a fellow-man in a duel. There he stood like a pillar. Sometimes he would apparently wake up in recollection; he would pace off the distance, and give the word, 'Fire!' Then he would cry out, 'He is dead! He is dead!' This was the power of conscience, of remorse. It was unsettled reason, and left the man in the grasp of his crime as an eternal, ghastly reality of his being."

194. When Professor Webster, of America, was awaiting his trial for murder, he brought against his fellow-prisoners the charge of insulting him through the walls of his cell, and screaming to him, "You are a bloody man!" On examination it was found that the charge was wholly groundless, and that the accusatory voices were imaginary, being but the echo of a guilty conscience.—*Denton*.

195. Bessus, a native of Pelonia in Greece, being one day seen by his neighbors pulling down some birds' nests and passionately destroying their young, was severely reprov'd by them for his ill nature and cruelty to those creatures that seemed to court his protection. He replied that their notes were to him insufferable, as they never ceased twitting him of the murder of his father.—*Arvine*.

196. "Those who have seen Holman Hunt's picture of 'The Awakened Conscience' will not soon forget it. There are only two figures—a man and a woman, sitting in a somewhat gaudily furnished room, beside a piano. His fingers are on the instrument; his face, which is reflected in a mirror, is handsome and vacant, evidently that of a man about town, who supposes the brightest part of creation is intended to administer to his amusement. A music-book on the floor is open at the words: 'Oft in the Stilly Night.' That tune has struck some chord in his companion's heart. Her face of horror says what no language could say: 'That tune has told me of other days when I was not as now.' The tune has done what the best rules that ever were devised could not do. It has brought a message from a father's house."

CONSECRATION

197. The Roman disciples were urged to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which was their reasonable service (Rom. 12:1). They were to dedicate all of life to God, as animals were laid upon the altar in sacrifice.

Consecration and sanctification are frequently alluded to as if identical. There is a difference requiring emphasis. Consecration is our work—sanctification the work of God. We consecrate to God that which God makes perfect by sanctification.

Consecration implies self-renunciation: the complete dethronement of the idol of self, the elevation of the Lord Jesus to His rightful place in our hearts and lives, and entire submission to His holy will. Such an offering, presented uncomplainingly, joyfully, is essential to the true Christian life.

That life does not end in attending services, worshipping, hearing the Word expounded, etc. It should begin there, and be continued by the aid of such exercises, yet it must be kept in mind that no Christian life is complete minus the offering of self, body, soul, and spirit, in absolute devotedness to Christ and his service, to be used only as He requires.

Such an offering is "a living sacrifice." Victims were slain, and their dead bodies presented upon Jewish altars for sacrifice. The carcasses were consumed, and could not, of course, be offered again. Christianity does not ask for a dead sacrifice. It requires one lifelong offering of all our physical, intellectual, and moral energies, joyfully presented to the service of the Lord.

198. Consecration is not wrapping one's self in a holy web in the sanctuary, and then coming forth after prayer and twilight meditation, and saying: "There, I am consecrated." Consecration is taking all advantage of trust funds—as confidential debts owed to God: it is simply dedicating one's life, in its whole flow, to God's service.—*H. W. Beecher.*

199. The true disciple is bound to adopt the double motto: "I believe and I belong."—*A. J. Gordon.*

200. "Consecration is going out into the world where God Almighty is, and using every power for His glory."

201. The difficulty with the church to-day is not poor preaching, but unclean living by Christians. If we could bring up practise to profession, and the testimony of the life to the talk of the lips; if we could be consistent Christians on the six days between the Sundays, that holy living would of itself be the strongest possible appeal to our unsaved friend. "What the church needs is not more of us, but a better brand of us."—*Chicago Standard.*

202. "If you would lift me, you must be on higher ground."

203. God does not want golden vessels, and He does not want silver vessels, but He has got to have clean vessels. . . . God has yet to show the world what He can do with a man entirely consecrated to Him.—*D. L. Moody.*

204. "A king sent his ambassador to prepare a house for him. One was obtained, but the owner asked that he might retain one room for his wife and family. That could not be done. Another suitable house was inspected, but the owner asked that a room be retained for certain valuable treasures he owned. No, that could not be; he must have the whole house. So Christ wants all, or none."

205. "A man was standing in a telephone booth, trying to talk, but could not make out the message. He kept saying: 'I can't hear; I can't hear.' The other man, by and by, said sharply: 'If you'll shut the door, you can hear.' His door was not shut, and so he heard the street and store noises as well as the man's voice. Some folks have gotten their hearing badly confused because their doors have not been shut enough; man's voice and God's voice get mixed in their ears."

206. "A young doctor by the name of Brown, with the brightest prospects for a successful career as a physician, without warning was stricken with blindness. The man rose triumphant from the struggle. 'O God,' he prayed, 'I consecrate my talent of blindness to thee.' He, through his limitation of blindness, worked out the alphabet for the blind. How immeasurable has

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been his gift to suffering mankind, as he allowed God to lead him through his limitation into greater service."

207. When Robert Moffat, the Cheshire gardener, offered himself as a missionary, some of his friends thought, and others actually said, that his brains were turned. His reply was: "Turned? So they are. But they are turned the right way."—*Dr. Clifford.*

208. Mr. Hudson Taylor, while once travelling in China, came to a river, and hired a boatman to ferry him across it. Just after he had done this, a Chinese gentleman, in silks and satins, reached the river, and, not observing Mr. Taylor, asked the boatman to hire the boat to him. This the man refused to do, saying that he had just engaged the boat to the foreigner. At this the Chinese gentleman looked at Mr. Taylor, and, without a word, dealt him a heavy blow with his fist between the eyes. Mr. Taylor was stunned and staggered back, but he presently recovered himself, and, looking up, saw his assailant standing between himself and the river's brink. In an instant Mr. Taylor raised his hands to give the man a push into the stream. But in an instant more, he dropped his arms at his side. Mr. Taylor then said to the gentleman: "You see, I could have pushed you into the stream. But the Jesus whom I serve would not let me do this. You were wrong in striking me, for the boat was mine; and since it is mine, I invite you to share it with me and to go with me across the river." The Chinese gentleman dropped his head in shame, and, without a word, he stepped into the boat to accept the hospitality thus graciously offered to him. Mr. Taylor was a man of naturally quick temper, but, evidently, for him to live was Christ.—*Henry W. Frost.*

209. The sweetest exposition I ever heard of the passing of Enoch was that of a little girl. She went home from Sunday school, and said: "Mother, we have had such a lovely lesson to-day." And the mother said: "Tell me, darling." And the little one said: "It was about a man who used to go for walks with God." "Well," said the mother, "that is lovely: what happened to that man?" "Well, mother, I will tell you. He used to go for walks with God, and one day, mother, one day they

walked on and on, until at last God said to him, 'Enoch, you are a long way from home; you had better come in and stay with me,' and he went." That is the truth. The child had got to the heart of the matter. "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."—*G. Campbell Morgan*.

210. "A young, unknown artist desired to copy a beautiful picture that hung in a palace in Rome. He was refused permission to copy it in the palace, so he set to work to reproduce it from memory. Hour after hour he would sit before the picture until it took possession of him, and then, hurrying home, would begin to paint. Each day he spent some time gazing on the original, and each day saw some new loveliness. As he looked and toiled, his power grew. At last there stood in his studio such a wonderful copy that all who looked said: 'We must see the original.' This should be the ultimatum of all our Christian service: so to reproduce the Lord Jesus Christ that men will say, 'We must see Jesus.'"

CONVERSATION

211. To converse rationally is a power distinguishing man from the brute. "Speech is silver: silence is golden;" but if silence is unbroken by conversation, it becomes unendurable. Care, however, is needed, lest men fail to use this talent profitably. James writes of the man who offends not in word, and puts a tight rein upon his tongue (Jas. 3:2). One of the highest attainments is the proper government of our speech. Christians should avoid slander, falsehood, prevarication, provocation, and all mischievous and unprofitable conversation.

Jesus said: "And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). Paul wrote: "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be" (Eph. 4:29). "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one" (Col. 4:6).

All conversation evil in tendency should be avoided, that by our speech we may "bless, and curse not." Of the church it is proclaimed: "They that feared the Lord spake often one to an-

other" (Mal. 3:16). "Foolish talking," or "jesting," is "not befitting" (Eph. 5:4). This does not mean innocent joking, pleasantries, etc., which are, at times, as inspiriting and healthful as recreation, but the useless babble of the fool, the ceaseless punning upon all questions, secular or sacred. There is a need for reality, naturalness, truth, sympathy. Thus, conversation may be used to cheer the sorrowing, instruct the ignorant, reclaim the fallen, and prove a most valuable auxiliary to Christian service.

212. It is unnecessary to point out all the pests of conversation, or to dwell particularly on the *sensibles*, who pronounce dogmatically on the most trivial points, and speak in sentences; the *wonderers*, who are always wondering what o'clock it is, or wondering whether it will rain or not, or wondering when the moon changes; the phraseologists, who explain a thing by "All that and t' other"; and lastly, the silent persons, who seem afraid of opening their mouths lest they should catch cold, and literally observe the precepts of the gospel, letting their conversation be only "Yea, yea," and "Nay, nay."

We should endeavour to turn this particular talent to our advantage, and consider the organs of speech as the instruments of understanding; we should be very careful not to use them as the weapons of vice, or tools of folly, and do our utmost to unlearn any trivial or ridiculous habits, which tend to lessen the value of such an inestimable prerogative.—*Steele*.

213. The Greek declares:

"The boneless tongue, so small and weak,
Can crush and kill."

The Turk asserts: "The tongue destroys a greater horde than does the sword."

214. "A Christian minister was once visited by a very loquacious young lady, who, forgetting the modesty of her sex and the superior gravity of an aged preacher, engrossed all the conversation of the interview with small talk concerning herself. When she rose to retire he said: 'Madam, before you withdraw I have one piece of advice to give you, and that is, when you

go into company again, after you have talked *half an hour* without intermission, I recommend it to you to stop awhile and see if any other of the company has anything to say.’”

215. “The vice of abusing absent ones in conversation was so abhorred by Augustine that over the table where he dined he had two verses inscribed, warning all those who sat with him, that if they carped at any person absent, that board was not for them.”

216. Some men are very entertaining for a first interview, but after that they are exhausted and run out: on a second meeting we shall find them very flat and monotonous; like hand-organs, we have heard all their tune.—*C. Colton*.

217. The story is told of the person who invited a company of his friends that were accustomed to take the Lord’s name in vain, and contrived to have all their discourse taken down and read to them. Now, if they could not endure to hear the words repeated which they had spoken during a few hours, how shall they bear to have all that they have uttered through a long course of years brought forth as evidence against them at the tribunal of God?—*Scott*.

COMING (THE SECOND)

218. The second advent is in the forefront of New Testament themes. It is the burden of our Lord’s predictions; one of the greatest of apostolic themes. The early church looked forward to Christ’s coming again as a great event towering above all others.

Peter writes twice of the “revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:7, 13). Paul says: “Ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven” (1 Thess. 1:9, 10). John writes: “And now, my little children, abide in him, that, if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming” (1 John 2:28). Again: “Behold, he cometh with the clouds: and every eye shall see him, and they which pierced him: and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him” (Rev. 1:7). Nothing is

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surer than this: He is coming again; not as He once came, but with indescribable glory. He came once in weakness; He will come again in mighty power. He came first as a babe; He will come again as a conquering King. He once came to save; He will come again to judge the iniquitous, and to receive His own to Himself.

When shall He come? No man nor angel can tell (Matt. 24:36). A great veil hangs over the future, to be lifted only by God's hand. Many profess to be able to map out the future. They produce their "Apocalyptic time-tables," and are amazed when Christians refuse to take them as their guide. After all, what matters it to the purest faith as to just when He will come, whether "at the first watch, or at midnight, or at early dawn"? As with their Lord, to the faithful "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. 3:8). Our part of the program is to get ready. What should we do till He come? We should

1. Patiently wait. "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able to subject all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21).

2. Constantly watch. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh" (Matt. 24:42).

3. Earnestly work. "Go work to-day in my vineyard" (Matt. 21:28). "Let each man prove his own work" (Gal. 6:4). When Christ shall come again, we shall see Him, not merely in figure, illustration, or Scriptural portraiture, but as He is, "shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).

219. The great body of believers are united in expecting both an age of glory and a personal return of Christ. As to many related events they differ; but as to the *one great precedent condition* of that coming age or that promised return of the Lord, there is absolute harmony of conviction: *the gospel must first be preached to all nations* (Matt. 24:14). The church must continue to "make disciples of all the nations, . . . even unto the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19, 20). This is therefore a time, not for unfriendly criticism of fellow-Christians, but for

friendly conference; not for disputing over divergent views, but for united action; not for dogmatic assertion of prophetic programs, but for the humble acknowledgment that "we know in part," not for idle dreaming, but for the immediate task of evangelising the world.—*Charles R. Erdman.*

220. The reason why men sleep so soundly in security is, because they either do not believe that Christ will come again, or do not think of it seriously, so as to expect it. The servant that looks for his master will be loath to be found in bed when he comes; no, he sits up to open the door for him when he knocks. Christ hath told us He will come, but not when, that we might never put off our clothes, or put out the candle. "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."—*Gurnall.*

221. "In England, when judges come into a town to open the assizes, a sound of trumpets announces their arrival. How different are the feelings which the trumpets make in the minds of different men! The innocent man hears them unmoved. They proclaim no terrors to him. He listens, and looks on quietly, and is not afraid. But often there is some poor wretch waiting his trial, in a silent cell, to whom those trumpets are a knell of despair. They tell him that the day of trial is at hand. Yet a little while, and he will stand at the bar of judgment, and hear witness after witness tell the story of his misdeeds. Yet a little while, and all will be over: the trial, the verdict, the sentence, and the fetters will be clapped on his hands, and he will be led to the dungeon. No wonder the prisoner's heart beats loudly when he hears the trumpets sound. So shall it be when the trumpet of the archangel shall sound. It will mean joy to some, but intense sorrow to others."

222. I have thought on it many a time, as a small emblem of that day, when I have seen a prevailing army drawing towards the towns and castles of the enemy. Oh! with what glad hearts do all the poor prisoners within hear the news and behold their approach! How do they run up to their prison windows, and thence behold their friends with joy! How glad are they at the roaring report of that cannon which is the enemy's terror! How

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do they clap each other on the back, and cry, "Deliverance! deliverance!" while, in the meantime, the late insulting, scorning, cruel enemies begin to speak them fair, and beg their favour; but all in vain, for they are not at the disposal of prisoners, but of the general. Their fair usage may make their conditions somewhat the more easy, but yet they are used as enemies still.—*Baxter*.

223. We are to see Christ *as He is*. That intimates that we see Him now as we imagine Him to be. We see Him now by illustrations and figures, by our analogies and hints; but the day is coming when we shall see Him as He is. All these little sketches will be filled up and outmeasured. The dim points of light which give glory now will be like twinkling stars, and the thing itself will be like the sun in the morning. The whole heaven will be full of Christ—beautiful as He is, and fruitful as He is, in all joy and peace. There is to be a disclosure, compared with which the disclosures of this world will be as twilight compared to midday.—*H. W. Beecher*.

COURAGE

224. Physical courage is largely constitutional. Bodily temperament often aids men in the hour of danger. Such courage, in other cases, is the result of careful training. In but rare cases does one see moral and physical courage united in the same character. Men exhibit unflinching nerve in moments of great peril; they coolly face danger, and even calmly go down to their graves rather than show the white feather. Yet such brave souls will frequently cow before a sneer, and deny their Lord in the presence of the enemy.

Followers of the Lord Jesus should cultivate this courage of a higher grade. Like their Master, they should set their face like a flint (Isa. 50:7), fearlessly uphold God's truth, "resist the tides of fashionable wrong," and be dauntless in the hour of opposition, persecution, and even death.

To produce such courage, one needs great faith and confidence in Christ. As the presence of a general upon the battlefield puts new heart into fainting and despairing soldiers, so the presence of our Master is to His despondent followers a

great incentive in the fighting zone. "Quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13).

225. We all understand the general difference between physical and moral courage: the one belonging rather to the bodily temperament, the other to the mind—the one to the animal, the other to the man: physical courage opposing itself to dangers which threaten the person or the life; moral courage the opposite of *weakness*, and proof against ridicule, false shame, the fashion of the day. And we know they may be united—as they were, for example, pre-eminently combined in that great man (Duke of Wellington) whose loss we deplore; or they may be separated, as, for instance, when Cranmer signed his recantation, and yet afterwards manifested at the stake the most unflinching fortitude. And it is often to be noted that those who abound in physical courage, never appalled by dangers, or even courting them, are deficient in moral courage, afraid of their companions, easily seduced to evil, shrinking before a laugh or a sneer.—*Dr. Hawkins.*

226. "The Duke of Wellington once despatched two officers on a service of great hazard, and, as they were riding together to the place of rendezvous, the one turned to the other, and saw the sweat-beads on his brow, his lips quivering, and his cheeks pale as with the paleness of fear. Reining in his horse, he said, 'Why, you are afraid.' 'I am,' was the answer, 'and if you were half as much afraid as I am, you would relinquish the duty altogether.' Without wasting a word upon his companion, the officer galloped back to headquarters, and complained bitterly that he had been sent on a service of such hazard in the presence of a coward. 'Off, sir, to your duty,' was the reply, 'or the coward will have done the business before you get there.' And the Duke was right. There was physical timidity, perhaps the result of a highly wrought nervous organisation, for often the nobler the frame, the tenderer the fibres, but there was a regard for duty which bore him above his fears to triumph. 'He would die, but never surrender.'"

227. "A splendid illustration of moral courage is seen in the character of Enoch Arden, who, returning after many years and

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finding his wife married again in the belief that he was lost forever, turned sadly from the sight of the happy home, and, staggering into the bleak night, prayed to God to give him strength not to break in upon the peace of his wife and children."

228. "People will not talk of Mr. Alfred Vanderbilt in future as the millionaire sportsman and man of pleasure. He will be remembered as the 'children's hero,' and men and women will salute his name. When the 'Lusitania' was torpedoed, he, with hundreds of others, went down to a watery grave. As death was nearing he showed a gallantry which no words can adequately describe. He stood outside the palm saloon on the star-board side with his valet, Ronald Denyer, by his side. He looked around on the scene of horror and despair with pitying eyes. 'Find all the kiddies you can, boy,' he said to his valet. The man rushed off immediately, collecting the children, and as he brought them to Mr. Vanderbilt the millionaire dashed to the boats with two little ones in his arms at a time. When he could no longer find any more children, he went to the assistance of the women, and placed as many as he could in safety. In all his work he was gallantly assisted by Denyer, and the two continued their efforts until the very end."

229. "The following prayer was found in the desk of a schoolboy after his death: 'O God! give me courage to fear none but Thee.'"

230. "Lord Palmerston was once speaking to a famous French statesman on the comparative merits of European soldiers. 'French soldiers are the bravest in the world,' claimed the Frenchman. 'Ours are not the bravest in the world,' replied Lord Palmerston, 'but they are *brave for a quarter of an hour longer* than any others.' It is that extra quarter of an hour that tells."

231. "Even Frederick the Great ran away from his first battle. The brave Chaplain Trumbull, before his first battle, was nervous as to how he would act under fire. He gave orders to his servant, Dick, to shoot him if he started to run to the

rear. That would, at least, prevent him from disgracing the cause he represented. But in actual conflict he was the bravest of the brave."

232. At the Centennial Convention of churches of Christ, held at Pittsburgh, U. S. A., in October, 1909, Mr. W. H. Book said: "The business of a soldier is to fight. I was in a court-room one day when a soldier applied for a pension. It was necessary that he establish his reputation for bravery and service. His witness testified that he had known the applicant for a long while. The judge said, 'Do you know his reputation for service?' 'Yes, sir; I know he did camp service.' Many who have enlisted under the blood-stained banner of King Immanuel have never been in any other than camp service; all they have done was to occasionally warm a bench while they listened to a sermon on 'Reasons for Our Existence.'"

THE COVENANTS

233. A covenant is a solemn agreement between two parties. There are many such covenants recorded in the Bible. Of those between God and man, there are two that stand out conspicuously and in contrast. They are called the "old" and "new" covenants. The old covenant was that which God made with the Israelites when He led them forth from Egypt into the wilderness. It was the outcome of a promise of God to Abraham. It was purely earthly, having to do with the possession of the land of Canaan and the increase and prosperity of the Israelites. The law, with all its commands and ceremonies, was included and was to be obeyed as the grand condition of this covenant remaining in force.

But the Israelites broke away from the law of God, and "continued not" in God's covenant. Having been broken, it could not be renewed. Therefore God made a "new covenant." When a man makes a new will, the former will becomes null and void. So God's "new covenant" "made the first old," and it therefore "vanished away" (Heb. 8).

The "new covenant" is infinitely "better" than the old. Its peculiar features, as contrasted with the "old covenant," are as follows: It was made in Christ Jesus, who ratified it with His

own blood; it is not confined to one nation, but is extended to "all nations" and "every creature." It secures to all who embrace it and yield to its terms the forgiveness of all sin and peace with God. It confers upon all its subjects the noble status of "sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty." And, lastly, it secures to us the life to come, "which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away."

These two covenants are not divided by the books called the Old and New Testaments. The death of Christ on the cross marked the passing of the "old covenant" and the introduction of the new.

234. Two institutions are constantly brought to our view in God's word: the old and new covenants. The old was by Moses, and the new is by Jesus; hence, Moses represents the one and Jesus the other. The law sometimes stands for the one and the gospel for the other; the letter, in some cases, stands for the one and the spirit for the other; the old covenant, in some cases, stands for the one and the new covenant for the other; the Old Testament, in some instances, stands for the one and the New Testament for the other. No matter which of these representative terms is used, on either side, the same thing is meant. One is the old dispensation and the other the new; the old institution and the new—the former by Moses and the latter by Jesus. It then becomes a matter of transcendent importance to determine distinctly, all the time, what belongs to the old institution and what to the new; what belongs to the *better* covenant and what belongs to the inferior—to determine where the one terminates and the other begins. . . . Paul says (Eph. 2:14-16): "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace: and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."—*Benj. Franklin.*

235. "The patriarchal dispensation was the starlight, the Jewish dispensation was the moonlight, and the Christian dispensation was the full sunlight. The patriarchs had the bud,

the Jews had the blossom, the Christian has the matured fruit of divine grace."

236. It was a fine thought of Luther to compare the Old Testament and the New to the men who carried upon a staff between them the branch with the cluster of grapes. They were both bearing the same precious fruit; but one of them saw it not. The other saw both the fruit and the man who was helping him. The Hebrew believers did not see the full scope and value of the truth they were bearing to the world, but Christians see it all, and how it was given in outline and shadow to the elder economy. According to Augustine: "The New Testament is enfolded in the Old, and the Old is unfolded in the New." Both are indispensable to the completeness of Christian thought and to the integrity of Christian character.—*Christian Intelligencer*.

237. A common error is made of retrograding to the old, fleshly basis of membership, and making flesh, and not spirit, the ground of membership in the church. . . . A preacher was once on a train of cars, and soon saw that the two gentlemen sitting in front of him were both preachers; that they resided in the same city and were rather intimate acquaintances with each other; that one was a Methodist and the other a Presbyterian. As the train glided on, they engaged in conversation, sometimes bordering on argument, touching the comparative merits of their respective churches. After many pleasant hits had been made, the Methodist preacher said to the Presbyterian, "We have the advantage of you in our church." "In what?" enquired the other. "We give all their choice in baptism: if they require immersion, we immerse; if they prefer sprinkling, we sprinkle, or pouring, we pour." The other appeared perplexed with this. There was a show of liberality in it that the other did not know how to offset. The Methodist preacher seemed to triumph in this liberty in his church of all having their "choice of modes." After talking loud and in a somewhat exultant manner for some moments, he turned to the preacher back of him, knowing nothing as to who he was, and, seeing that he was listening to the conversation, said: "Stranger, do you not think I have the better of the argument?" "What church

do you represent?" said the strange preacher. "The Methodist Episcopal Church," said he. "Did you say you give all their *choice* between sprinkling, pouring, and immersion?" "I did," said he. "I believe you baptise infants sometimes," said the stranger. "I do," said he. "What becomes of the *choice* of an infant when you baptise it?" enquired the stranger. He did not tell. It has no choice, not only between sprinkling, pouring, and immersion, but it has no choice between Romanists and Protestants, any more than the types that shall print these words have, whether they will print these or some other words; no more choice than the bricks in your house, whether they would go into it, or into some other house.—*Benj. Franklin.*

238. The above-quoted writer also tells of an English lady, once a schoolteacher, who heard a discourse that roused her considerably, and, in the private circle, introduced the subject of "infant baptism," as she styled it. The preacher told her that there was a matter lying back of that of much more importance to her. She enquired what it was. He told her that some people insisted that no religious rite, ordinance, or act could be of any value unless the heart was in it, and enquired how she looked on that matter. She said she insisted the same herself. He enquired what was meant by the terms "professors" and "non-professors" of religion. She replied, illustrating by the profession of law, medicine, and teaching. He then said, "Madam, did you ever, for yourself, from your own heart and with your own lips, make a profession of the religion of Christ?" She replied, "My dear mother consecrated me to the Lord when I was a little child." The preacher continued: "I presume your mother was a good woman and did many good things; but I am enquiring into what *you have done yourself*. The apostle says, 'To whom ye *yield yourselves* servants to obey.' Did you ever from your own heart make a profession yourself, or yield yourself to God?" Under much excitement she rose and left the room. After hearing a few more discourses, she came forward, stood up before her God and Saviour, and from her own heart, and with her own mouth, confessed the Saviour of the world, and *yielded herself* to be a servant of God.

CREEDS

239. Attached to every creed or confession of faith in Protestant Christendom may be found, in substance, the following: "The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain the word of God, and are the only infallible rule of faith and practise." Thus humanly compiled creeds make a confession of their own guilt, for they admit they are fallible. They have been well termed "unnecessary appendages."

"If a creed contains more than is in the Bible, it contains too much. If it contains less than is in the Bible, it contains too little. If it contains the same, it is unnecessary." No exception, of course, could be taken to a church printing and circulating a statement of what it believes and practises, but no church has Scriptural warrant for making such a statement authoritative, or a test of church fellowship. In the primitive church, the test of fellowship was the confession of faith in Christ (Matt. 16:16), and baptism into His name by the penitent convert (Acts 2:38). Human creeds are divisive, for no creed obtains universal endorsement, whilst all true Christians accept the word of God.

Human creeds were unknown in primitive days, during the most prosperous period of the church's history. In 325 A. D. the Nicene Creed was framed by the Council of Nice. "This was the first human creed ever acknowledged by the Christian community; and this was the beginning of sorrows to the church of Christ."

Hilary, who was Bishop of Poitiers, and lived in the fourth century, writing a few years after the rise of creed-making, says: "It is a thing equally deplorable and dangerous that there are as many creeds as there are opinions among men, as many doctrines as inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us; because we make creeds arbitrarily, and explain them as arbitrarily. And as there is but one faith, so there is but one only God, the Lord, and one baptism. We remove this one faith when we make so many different creeds; and that diversity is the reason why we have no true faith among us. We cannot be ignorant that *since the Council of Nice we have done nothing but make creeds*. And while we fight against words, litigate about new questions, dispute about

equivocal terms, complain of authors, that every one may make his own party triumph; while we cannot agree, while we anathematise one another, there is hardly one that adheres to Jesus Christ. What change was there not in the creed last year? . . . We make creeds every year; nay, every moon we repent of what we have done; we defend those that repent of what we have done; we defend those that repent; we anathematise those that we defended. So we condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others; and, reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been *the cause of each other's ruin.*"

240. Human creeds are unnecessary, for we have the Bible, which all acknowledge to be the fountain from which all those little streams (creeds) have been drawn off. Who would leave the fountain and drink at the little stream far below? We suppose no one who understands the superiority of the former over the latter would be guilty of such an inconsistency, and yet this is just what the supporters of human creeds are doing! . . . Human creeds are unnecessary, because the church of Jesus Christ had no such thing until three hundred years of peace and unparalleled prosperity had rolled away. These were the golden days of the church. Then there was "one Lord, and His name one." On the broad basis of the word of God alone, the disciples of the Lord stood firmly united, and the truth went forth "conquering and to conquer," until Rome was revolutionised, the thrones of the Cæsars invaded, and Rome's proud emperor bowed to the authority of Him who was born in a stable.—*J. B. Ferguson.*

241. The New Testament teaches, with unmistakable explicitness, that the true creed of a Christian is not a propositional manifesto, but a personal life—the life of Christ.—*Dr. Thomas.*

242. "I shape my creed every week," was the confession of one to me. Whereunto shall I liken such unsettled ones? Are they not like those birds which frequent the Golden Horn, and are to be seen from Constantinople, of which it is said that they are always on the wing, and never rest? No one ever saw them alight on the water or on the land; they are

forever poised in midair. The natives call them "lost souls," seeking rest and finding none. Assuredly, men who have no personal rest in the truths of God's word, if they are not unsaved themselves, are, at least, very unlikely to save others.—*Spurgeon*.

243. Three natural philosophers go out into the forest, and find a nightingale's nest, and forthwith they begin to discuss the habits of the bird, its size, and the number of eggs it lays; and one pulls out of his pocket a treatise of Buffon, and another of Cuvier, and another of Audubon; and they read and dispute till at length the quarrel runs so high over the empty nest that they tear each other's leaves, and get red in the face, and the woods ring with their conflict; when, lo! out of the green shade of a neighboring thicket the bird itself, rested, and disturbed by these side noises, begins to sing. At first its song is soft and low, and then it rises and swells, and waves of melody float up over the trees and fill the air with tremulous music, and the entranced philosophers, subdued and ashamed of their quarrel, shut their books and walk home without a word. So men who, around the empty sepulchre of Christ, have wrangled about the forms of religion, about creeds, and so forth, when Christ Himself, disturbed by their discords, sings to them out of heaven, of love and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, are ashamed of their conflicts, and go quietly and meekly to their duties.—*H. W. Beecher*.

DEATH

244. The fear of death appears to be natural. By the side of death, like a spectre, stands sin, "for the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Even Christians do not always contemplate death's approach fearlessly. Temperaments differ, and the presence of painful apprehension upon contemplation of death is no evidence of unholiness, nor is the absence of fear a proof of sanctity. It is well to familiarise ourselves with thoughts of death; to bring our souls close up to it, as we lead a timid horse closely to an obstacle that must be faced. After all, true courage does not consist so much in being fearless, but in triumphing over fear.

Death involves a separation of body and soul. It means, also, a separation from loved ones, for they cannot accompany us through the dark valley; no human arm can support us there. What, then, is our comfort? It is this. There is no separation from Him who is "the resurrection and the life." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8:35). As a traveller can trust himself to a vessel upon the wide and stormy ocean, sailing towards a country he has never seen, because of the presence of a skilful pilot, so men commit themselves to the Pilot of their souls, knowing that He will bear them safely to the eternal haven of rest. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee" (Isa. 43:2). "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4). When the candle of earthly life goes out, the "light of the world" will illumine the tomb. Even when life's flame is flickering, the hand of our great Friend may remove the veil, and reveal to our eyes the glory of heaven. He has conquered death, and is now able to "deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Rom. 2:15). He will reserve "dying strength for the dying hour," and give to His followers a triumphant entry into the glory prepared for His own.

245. It is no matter of uncertainty to any one of us whether he himself shall die. He knows it. Every time the funeral bell tolls, the thought in some shape suggests itself, I am a mortal, dying man. That is knowing it. Which of us has realised it? Who can shut his eyes and bring it before him as a reality—that the day will come when the hearse will stand at the door for him, and that all this bright world will be going on without him; and that the very flesh which now walks about so complacently will have the coffin-lid shut down upon it, and be left to darkness, and loneliness, and silence, and the worm?—*F. W. Robertson.*

246. "Mr. Owen visited Alexander Campbell at Bethany, to make arrangements for their discussion on the evidences of Christianity. In one of their excursions about the farm they

came to Mr. Campbell's family burying-ground; when Mr. Owen stopped, and, addressing himself to Mr. Campbell, said: 'There is one advantage I have over Christians: I am not afraid to die. Most Christians have fear in death, but if some few items of my business were settled, I should be perfectly willing to die at any moment.' 'Well,' answered Mr. Campbell, 'you say you have no fear of death; have you any hope in death?' After a solemn pause, 'No,' said Mr. Owen. 'Then,' rejoined Mr. Campbell, pointing to an ox standing near, '*you are on a level with that brute*. He has fed until he is satisfied, and stands in the shade, whisking off the flies, and has neither hope nor fear in death.'"

247. It is said of the celebrated Cæsar Borgia, that in his last moments he exclaimed: "I have provided, in the course of my life, *for everything except death*; and now, alas! I am to die, although entirely unprepared."

248. The French nurse who was present at the death-bed of Voltaire, being urged to attend an Englishman whose case was critical, said, "Is he a Christian?" "Yes," was the reply, "he is—a Christian in the highest and best sense of the term—a man who lives in the fear of God. But why do you ask?" "Sir," she replied, "I was the nurse that attended Voltaire in his last illness, and for all the wealth of Europe I would never see another infidel die."

249. There was a certain nobleman who kept a fool, to whom he one day gave his staff, with a charge to keep it till he should meet with one who was a greater fool than himself. Not many years after, the nobleman fell sick, even unto death. The fool came to see him. His sick lord said to him, "I must shortly leave you." "And whither art thou going?" said the fool. "Into another world," replied his lordship. "And when will you come again?—within a month?" "No." "Within a year?" "No." "When, then?" "Never." "*Never!*" said the fool. "And what provision hast thou made for thy entertainment there, whither thou goest?" "None at all." "No!" said the fool, "none at all! Here, take my staff: for, with all my folly, I am not guilty of any such folly as this."—*Hall*.

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250. A woman, whose husband had lived a dissolute life, called upon me one evening greatly agitated in mind, to request me to see her dying husband in the Melbourne Hospital. In answer to her question, "Do you think it is well with your soul?" he had replied, "Don't bother me; I can't think of those things now."

251. A consumptive disease seized the eldest son and heir of the Duke of Hamilton, which ended in his death. A little while before his death, he took the Bible from under his pillow, and read several comforting passages. As death approached, he called his younger brother to his bedside, and, after talking affectionately and seriously to him, closed with these words: "And now, Douglas, in a little while you'll be a duke, but I shall be a king."—*W. R. Clark.*

252. A lady once told me that her father was a highly intellectual man, but made no profession of Christianity. He used rather to sneer at those who did, express contempt for open-air preachers, and the like. When dying, with an effort he raised himself on his pillow, and said, "My God, I'm damned;" and dropped back, dead. Her mother, who lived a good Christian life, said, as her last words, "Mary, may the blessing of God rest upon you."

253. When John Lambert, fastened to the stake, was burning to death, he clapped his hands, and cried out, "None but Christ! none but Christ!" until his nether extremities were burned, and he fell from the chains into the fire, still exclaiming in the midst of the flames, "None but Christ! none but Christ!"—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

254. A miser fell ill, and took his money-bags to bed, placing them close beside him, and every now and then lifting them up, and saying, "Must I leave you? Must I leave you?" This he continued to do until the end came, for in the dying hour itself he said, as he once more lifted a money-bag, "Must I leave you? Must I leave you? Have I lived all these years for you, and now must I leave you?" and in a few minutes he died.—*Burroughs.*

DOCTRINES

255. Converts of the day of Pentecost, the first members of the church of Christ, continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (teaching—R. V.) and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). John writes: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting; for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (John 2:9, 10).

The man who manufactures, or attempts to foist upon others, counterfeit coins is a traitor; so he who circulates doctrine that comes not from heaven, however genuine he makes it appear, is a traitor.

In apostolic days, Christians received the teaching of the apostles, who were Christ's inspired representatives. We also should ground our faith upon their word, as recorded in the New Testament, and thus build "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone" (Eph. 2:20).

Moses, we are told, ascended into the holy mount, where God gave him the tables of the commandments, and minute instructions for the building and furnishing of the tabernacle. God said to Moses: "Look that thou make them after their pattern which was showed thee in the mount" (Ex. 25:40). Christ, our divine lawgiver, has built the greater edifice of the "true tabernacle"—the church. The gospel law has been proclaimed upon Mount Zion (Acts 2), and the pattern for His church divinely revealed. We should do all things according to the pattern shown us in the mount.

John writes: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1). Paul says: "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21). This is specially necessary when so many are teaching false doctrine so plausibly—quoting texts as their authority, and overlooking fundamental truths. Men need to prove the spirits, lest they should "leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men" (Mark 7:8). To guard against

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apostasy from the truth, there should be careful reading and study of the Scriptures, independent of human interpretation.

It should always be remembered that one cannot measure the correctness of any theory—the truth of any doctrine—by the numbers who believe it. Also, as H. W. Beecher put it, that “no doctrine is good for anything that does not leave behind it an ethical furrow for the planting of seeds which shall spring up and bear abundant harvests.”

256. The best mode of opposing error is seldom to advert to it, but calmly and attractively to exhibit the opposite right and truth; for truth is, in itself, delightful to every unsophisticated mind. It wins its own way. . . . Let it be proposed in fulness and simplicity, with clearness and with affection, and the task is done. We shall thus gain the stronghold of every honest understanding; we shall thus win the citadel of every heart that can be won.—*Jebb*.

257. The majesty of truth needs other bulwarks than vulgar and cowardly vituperation. Coarse and violent language, excusable three hundred years ago by the manners of that day, was bold and brave on the lips of the Reformers, with whom the struggle was one of life and death, and who might be called to pay the penalty of their bold defiance with their blood. But the same fierceness of language now, when there is no personal risk in the use of it, in the midst of hundreds of men and women ready to applaud and honour violence as zeal, is simply a dastardliness from which every generous mind shrinks. You do not get the Reformers' spirit by putting on the armour they have done with, but by risking the dangers which these noble warriors risked. It is not their big words, but their large, brave heart, that makes the Protestant. Oh, be sure that he whose soul has anchored itself to rest on the deep, calm sea of truth does not spend his strength in raving against those who are still tossed by the winds of error. Spasmodic violence of words is one thing: strength of conviction is another.—*F. W. Robertson*.

258. We must not have it truthfully said of our sermons as was said by a certain lady, who, after having heard a minister

preach, was asked what she thought of the sermon, and whether there was not much spirit in it. "Oh, yes," she replied, "it was all spirit; there was no body to it at all." There must be some "body" in every discourse, some real sound doctrine, some suitable instruction for our hearers to carry home.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

259. To preach practical sermons, as they are called—that is, sermons upon virtues and vices—without inculcating those great Scripture truths of redemption, grace, etc., which alone can incite and enable us to forsake sin and follow righteousness—what is it but to put together the wheels, and set the hands of a watch, forgetting the spring, which is to make them all go?—*Horne.*

260. Some of our hearers do not desire to hear the whole counsel of God. They have their favorite doctrines, and would have us silent on all besides. Many are like the Scotchman who, after hearing a sermon, said: "It was very well if it hadna been for the trash of duties at the hinner end."—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

261. When I was a very young student, perhaps about sixteen years of age, I breakfasted with Cæsar Malan, of Geneva, at Dr. John Brown's. When the Doctor told him that I was a young student of theology, he said to me: "Well, my young friend, see that you hold up the lamp of truth to let the people see. Hold it up, hold it up, and trim it well. But remember this: you must not dash the lamp in people's faces. That would not help them to see." How often have I remembered his words! They have often been of use to me.—*Dr. Morrison.*

262. If one should go into the Louvre at Paris, and see the Venus de Milo, and begin to have admiration for that highest conception of a noble woman held by the Greek mind, and his guide should whisper to him, "It is very uncertain whether this is the original statue; in the time of Napoleon it was stolen, and it is said that it was sent back; but many think that another was made in imitation of it, and put in its place, and that this is the imitation," it would kill that man's enthusiasm in a second; and he is not going to say, "I admire that countenance," because

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it may not be that countenance. And the moment you introduce the element of uncertainty in regard to any substantial religious conviction, your doubt has taken away *that enthusiasm which only goes out toward certainty*.—*H. W. Beecher*.

263. A man's nose is a prominent feature in his face, but it is possible to make it so large that eyes and mouth and everything else are thrown into insignificance, and the drawing is a caricature and not a portrait. So, certain important doctrines of the gospel *can be so proclaimed in excess* as to throw the rest of truth into the shade, and the preaching is no longer the gospel in its natural beauty, but a caricature of the truth: of which caricature, however, let me say, some people seem to be mightily fond.—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

264. I can conceive a living man without an arm or a leg, but not without a head or a heart; so there are some truths essential to vital religion, and which all awakened souls are taught.—*Newton*.

265. The carpenter's gimlet makes but a small hole, but it enables him to drive a great nail. May we not here see a representation of those minor departures from the truth which prepare the minds of men for grievous errors, and of those thoughts of sin which open a way for the worst of crimes? Beware, then, of Satan's gimlet.—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

266. As he is a traitor to his prince who taketh upon him to coin moneys out of a base metal, yea, although in the stamp he putteth for a show the image of the prince; so he that shall broach any doctrine that cometh not from God, whatsoever he say for it, or what gloss soever he set on it, he is a traitor unto God; yea, in truth, a cursed traitor, though he were an angel from heaven (Gal. 1:8).—*T. Boston*.

267. The question is not whether a doctrine is beautiful, but whether it is true. When we want to go to a place, we don't ask whether the road leads through a pretty country, but whether it is the right road, the road pointed out by authority, the turn-pike road.—*Hare*.

268. Doctrines are the planets, but Christ is the sun: the stars of doctrine revolve around Him as their primal light.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

269. It is not enough that you hold right doctrines; nay, in a sense, hold all the doctrines. The right doctrines must be in the right places. Your astronomy may include all the bodies that enter into our solar system, but if it give a satellite the imperial position of the sun, your system passes into inextricable confusion. The machine may have all its parts, but if the great wheel that moves them, or the balance-wheel that regulates them, revolve on any shaft but its own, the entire mechanism either stops, or flies round in furious and destructive disorder. Even so, although all the doctrines of the gospel be present in our creed, we may commit a great, a dangerous—possibly a fatal—mistake by any malarrangement that would put these out of their proper place.—*Dr. Guthrie.*

270. The doctrines which many schools teach are no more like those of the Bible than the carved beams of Solomon's temple were like God's cedar-trees on Mount Lebanon. But men cut and hew till they have shaped their own fancies out of God's timber, and then they get upon them like judgment-day thrones, and call all the world to answer at their feet for heresies against their idols.—*H. W. Beecher.*

ELECTION

271. In the consideration of this question, it is wise to disentangle one's self from the theories of men, or the creeds of churches, and to examine carefully the Scripture references. It will thus be ascertained whether, in the passage under consideration, the election is national, such as when God chose the Jews (Deut. 7:6); individual election to special office or work, as in the case of Moses, Samuel, Paul, etc., or the separation which God makes between the saved and lost. In dealing with passages relating to election, two questions require answering: 1. Who are elected? 2. To what is the election? A clean answer will solve many difficulties.

In regard to individual election to salvation and eternal life,

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Scripture is directly opposed to the doctrine contained in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith; viz., "Those of mankind that are thus predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, *without any foresight of faith and good works, or perseverance in either of them,*" etc. (italics mine).

In contradistinction to such doctrine, which few intelligent men can endorse, the word of God makes it clear that the blessings of salvation are extended to all, but thrust upon none. "Whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified" (Rom. 8:30). God calls, but men must answer the call. "As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). Thus, all who receive Christ have the right to become children of God. One's salvation depends upon his own choice and conduct, and not upon the immutable decrees of the Almighty. Before the foundation of the world, God chose those who would choose Him. "The elect are whosoever will, and the non-elect are whosoever won't." "He that will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9). When men are lost, it is not that God wills it, but that they make no effort to be saved. "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life" (John 5:40).

272. When the ninth chapter of Romans is understood as illustrated by the Scriptures themselves, it is the grandest vindication of the character of God that could well be conceived. It is a glorious proof that God acts without respect of persons, and that He treats all men as His offspring. I repeat, it is the grandest vindication possible of the dealings of God with men, and it comes with tremendous power to us, because it shows us, that as all God's dealings are characterised by justice and righteousness, and that as He deals with every man and woman according to their own conduct, therefore, if we do not avail ourselves of the means of salvation that He has provided, the worse it will be for ourselves. Don't imagine, then, any

of you, that you are of the non-elect, and that it is of no use your trying to be saved. Put away any idea of that kind. Let God speak to you by His own word. Let Him, and not commentators, say what He means. And if you will study God's own word as it is, you will find that in everything He does, His character is vindicated, and, like the sun at noontide, it stands out clearly in its resplendent glory and perfectness.—*M. W. Green.*

273. A poor negro was laboring hard to bring his master to a knowledge of the truth, and was urging him to exercise faith in Christ, when he excused himself because he could not understand the doctrine of election. "Ah! massa," said the negro, "don't you know what comes before de Epistle to de Romans? You must read de Book de right way: de doctrine of election is in Romans, and dere is Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John first. You are only in Matthew yet; dat is about repentance; and when you get to John you will read where de Lord Jesus Christ said dat God so loved de world dat He gave His only begotten Son, dat whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but hab everlasting life." So, says C. H. Spurgeon, you will do better by reading the four Gospels first than by beginning to read in Romans; first study Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and then you can go on to the Epistles.

274. Do you say: "I believe in foreordination, and am waiting 'God's time'?" What farmer, when the sun runs high, and the earth is ready for the seed, and the small rain and the dew are coming on the earth, says: "I believe in foreordination; I shall not take the trouble to plant. If I'm to have a harvest, I *shall* have one"? Or what merchant, when he goes to his store in the morning, says: "If I'm to have a good, large heap of money in my till to-night, I *shall* have it there. No need for me to trouble myself to please customers; I believe in foreordination"? Men are not fools enough for this in temporal concerns, though plenty of them are so in regard to the interests of their souls. No, when they see God working for them *in nature*, they take hold with a right good will, and work too. . . . But when it comes to spiritual work, they hold quickly back, and exclaim, "Oh! Foreordination!" But this will be no plea for them,

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when they come forth from their graves, and when, from mountain and valley, and from the dark waves of the sea, they lift up their blanched faces to their Judge. Of all the myriads who will stand before Him, there will not be *one* who will have a word to say—they will be “speechless.”—*H. W. Beecher.*

275. A man of color who had received the gospel became a preacher amongst his brethren. He was addressed on one occasion by his master in these words: “And so I hear that you have become a preacher, Sam, and that you believe in election?” “Well, yas, sah, I believe dat truth is clearly revealed in the word of God.” “And I suppose, Sam, that you think that you are one of the elect,” rejoined the master. “Well, sah, I’s prepared to say dat I gib all diligence to make my calling and election sure, dat is true.” “But I suppose you don’t think I am one of the elect,” said Sam’s master. The sable preacher gave an answer which is well worth quoting. Sam knew his master was given to the pursuit of pleasure, money, and the service of sin. Very quietly he replied: “Well, massa, I am not sure about dat; dis I know—I never knew of an election where dar was no candidate.”—*Henry Varley.*

ETERNAL LIFE

276. There appears to have always existed a universal feeling that life does not end all. Apart from thoughts of nature’s resurrection from its winter grave, the wondrous transformations of insect life, and many other striking analogies, there is amongst all people a natural craving for, and expectation of, a future life. There is with all an instinctive feeling that this life is not enough; a sense of incompleteness; a longing for a second, and a higher and larger life. Right-thinking men believe that God has not created such hopes to blight them: they feel confident that to continue life is as easy to God as to create life; they desire to look behind the veil, to know what is the real goal of life, and what is yet to be.

The Bible leaves not man in doubt. It tells of the Lord Jesus, “who abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10). It clearly teaches that life will not remain as it is now; that it is probationary, a

training-ground, an apprenticeship, and the perfected life and work will be experienced beyond the veil.

This glorious hope is a strong incentive to right thinking and conduct. It gives true estimates of the position we occupy in the universe; it imparts a strong sense of duty, and leads men to make the necessary preparation for the larger life, lest neglect be found irretrievable, to be followed by endless consequences.

“ 'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant;
O life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that we want.”

277. But what is the proof of immortality? Not the analogies of nature, the resurrection of nature from a winter grave, or the emancipation of the butterfly. Not even the testimony to the fact of risen dead; for who does not know how shadowy and unsubstantial these intellectual proofs become in unspiritual frames of mind? No, the life of the spirit is the evidence. Heaven begun is the living proof that makes the heaven to come credible. “Christ in you [is] the hope of glory.” It is the eagle eye of faith which penetrates the grave, and sees far into the tranquil things of death. He alone can believe in immortality who feels the resurrection in him already.—*F. W. Robertson.*

278. “I once heard a preacher trying to teach young children that the soul would live after they were all dead. They listened, but did not understand what he was saying. But at last, taking his watch from his pocket, he said: ‘James, what is this I am holding in my hand?’ ‘A watch, sir.’ ‘Do you all see it?’ ‘Yes, sir.’ ‘How do you know it is a watch?’ ‘It ticks, sir.’ ‘Very well; can any of you hear it tick? All listen, now.’ After a pause: ‘Yes, sir; we hear it.’ He then took off the case, and held the case in one hand and the watch in the other. ‘Now, children, which is the watch? You see there are two which look like watches.’ ‘The little one in your right hand, sir.’ ‘Very well again; now I will lay the case aside, and put it away down there in my hat. Now let us see if you can hear the watch tick.’ ‘Yes, sir, we hear it,’ exclaimed several voices. ‘Well, the watch can tick, and go, and keep time, you see, when the case is taken off and put in my hat. The watch goes just as well. So it is with you, children. Your body is nothing but

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the case; your soul is inside. The case—the body—may be taken off and buried in the ground, and the soul will live and think, just as well as the watch will go, as you see, when the case is off.’ ”

279. I knew a man of eighty years of age who frequently said: “Well, I really must set about thinking of my future.” And yet we are not without warning: everything speaks of death.—*Alphonse Karr.*

280. A French deist was once arguing against the immortality of the soul. His Christian friend heard him through in silence, then replied: “Probably you are right, probably you are not immortal, but I *am*.”—*Lyman Abbott.*

281. Why should love allow the end of what it loves? If it cannot prevent the end, why does it create? It is as though a father should rear children till their love for him had bloomed into full sweetness, and then dig graves into which he thrusts them while their hearts are springing to his and his name is trembling upon lips that he smothers with eternal dust. It is related of an Arab chief, whose laws forbade the rearing of his female offspring, that the only tears he ever shed were when his daughter brushed the dust from his beard as he buried her in a living grave. But where are the tears of God as He thrusts back into eternal stillness the hands that are stretched out to Him in dying faith? If death ends life, what is this world but an ever-yawning grave in which the loving God buries His children with hopeless sorrow, mocking at once their love and hope and every attribute of His own nature?—*T. T. Munger.*

282. Over the triple doorways of the Cathedral of Milan there are three inscriptions spanning the splendid arches. Over one is carved a beautiful wreath of roses, and underneath is the legend: “All that which *pleases* is but for a moment.” Over the other is sculptured a cross, and there are the words: “All that which *troubles* us is but for a moment.” But underneath the great central entrance to the main aisle is the inscription: “*That only is important which is eternal.*” If we realise always these three truths. we will not let trifles trouble us, nor be

interested so much in the passing pageants of the hour. We would live, as we do not now, for the permanent and the eternal.

283. A writer says that on a cold, windy day he stopped at an apple-stand kept by a rough-looking Italian. He alluded to the severe weather, as he talked with the apple-vender; but the latter, with a cheerful smile and tone, replied: "Yes, pretty cold; but by and by—tink of dat!" The thought of the time of warm skies, flowers and singing birds being near comforted him while the cold winds blew. Yes, my brother, it may often be cold and cheerless in this life; but, by and by—think of that!

284. A couple of friends of mine in the war called upon one of our great Illinois farmers, to get him to give some money for the soldiers, and during their stay he took them up to the cupola of his house and told them to look over yonder, just as far as their eyes could reach, over that beautiful rolling prairie, and they said, "That is very nice." Yes, and it was all his. Then he took them up to another cupola, and said, "Look at that farm, and that, and that." These were farms stocked, improved, fenced; and they said, "These are very nice." And then he showed them horses, cattle, and sheepyards, and said, "They are all mine." He showed them the town where he lived, which had been named after him, a great hall, and building-lots, and those were all his, and, said he, "I came out West a poor boy, without a farthing, and I am worth all this." But when he got through, my friend said, "How much have you got up yonder?" and the old man's countenance fell, for he knew very well what that meant. "*What have you got up there—in the other world?*" "Well," he said, "I have not got anything there." "Why," said my friend, "what a mistake! A man of your intelligence and forethought and judgment to amass all this wealth; and now that you are drawing to your grave, you will have to leave it all. You cannot take a farthing with you, but you must die a beggar and a pauper;" and the tears rolled down his cheeks as he said, "It does look foolish." Only a few months after he died, as he had lived, and his property passed to others.—*D. L. Moody.*

285. I have a friend who has lived here an exile from his fatherland for twenty years in contentment. But awhile ago they sent him the picture of his mother, and ever since he has been full of restlessness, and I know before long he will be going home to see her. And when men come under the spell of the eternities, they sometimes have this far-off restless look until God calls them to Himself.

EVIDENCES (CHRISTIAN)

286. God does not expect us to rest our faith on blind credulity, but upon firm conviction. We are commanded to "be ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). Paul writes: "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:20).

Yet, many deprecate the study of evidences. Christianity, say they, is tried by experience, not by the understanding. It is a life—a possession, and not a belief. This is a half-truth. Both conviction and experience have their place. To personally experience Christ's power to save and to keep is, to the Christian, conclusive evidence, yet one needs to remember that there are many who will never be satisfied with anything which is not based upon sound reasoning. Hence the command to deal with such intelligently, and be ready to give a reason for our hope.

The only reason why many are believers in Christianity is because they were born and reared in so-called Christian lands instead of heathen countries. They are the creatures of environment; the faith of their fathers is good enough for them; had they been born in India, they would have been Mohammedans or Buddhists. Now, God expects us to use the reasoning faculty with which we are endowed, and intellectually judge for ourselves as to whether a religion or a doctrine is of God or not.

287. Would you prove the magic of the night, the rich harvests, the flowering meadows, to a man who, from dawn to twilight, and often under the moon, traverses the fields, who draws his scythe through the grass glittering with dew, who returns in the evening by the sides of rivers in which the stars

are reflected? But what eloquence would be necessary, what power of description and of reasoning to bring all this, living and real, to the child of a miner, some poor, dwarfed creature who, in the bowels of the earth, a smoking lamp fastened to his head, pushes his track along a dark gallery.

To him who sees, belief is easy; the thing exists: I touch it, it is mine. To him who sees not, you must bring faith; and he who names faith names contest and conflict.—*Gasparin*.

288. I have bought tropical morning-glory seeds for the greenhouse, with the assurance of the seedman that I could not raise them out of doors. I *did* raise them out of doors; that is the answer I gave to him. "But," he says, "it is not possible, in our summer, to raise them;" but I *did* it. "The summer is not long enough, or warm enough, to raise them here." I *have* raised them, and I shall not give up my argument upon that question.

If a man says that there never was a Christ, or that He was only a man, I answer that I have found Him of whom Moses and the prophets spake. I have asked Him, "What wilt Thou?" and He has told me. I have put my soul and my heart, as He has commanded me, into His hand. Will any man now undertake to reason me out of the result? I *know* in whom I have trusted, and know what He has done for me. Is the music of my life, the inspiration of every faculty, the transformation of my views, the regeneration of my hopes—are these nothing? Am I to go back eighteen hundred years, with the sceptical philosopher, to reason about Jerusalem and about the Lord Jesus Christ, and not reason upon my own actual, daily, positive experience?—*H. W. Beecher*.

289. "A Scottish doctor with his finger wrote in the garden the letters of his little son's name, sewed cress in the furrows, and smoothed the ground. Ten days after his son ran to him in astonishment, and said that his name was growing in the garden, and insisted on his father seeing it. 'Is it not mere chance?' asked his father. 'No, some one must have arranged it so.' 'Look at yourself,' said the doctor; 'consider your hands, fingers, legs, feet; came you hither by chance?' 'No, something must have made me.' 'And who is that something?' As he did

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not know, the father told him the name of the great being who had made him, and all the world; and he never forgot that lesson."

290. You have seen, it may be, an antique, Italian painted window, with the bright Italian sunshine glowing through it. It is the special excellence of pictured glass that the light which falls merely on the outside of other pictures is here interfused throughout the work, illuminating the design, and investing it with a living radiance. . . . Christian faith is a grand cathedral, with divinely pictured windows. Standing without, you see no glory, nor can possibly imagine any. Nothing is visible but the merest outline of dusky shapes. Standing within, all is clear and defined; every ray of light reveals an army of unspeakable splendours.—*Ruskin*.

291. A Christian has an evidence of experience; like that of a man who has long dwelt in a house which another has only walked round and examined on the outside. The external observer may question whether anything is to be found in the house at which he looks; but it is much too late for *us* to doubt who have long inhabited the dwelling. *We* cannot unknow what we have known; *we* cannot but have the clearest conviction that, till we were brought into this house, we were destitute of the shelter, provisions, and comforts which we now enjoy, and of which we are so desirous that others should be partakers.—*Cecil*.

292. Whenever we behold order and arrangement, our mental constitution compels us to infer that it must have originated in intelligence. We cannot believe that orderly arrangements can have resulted from the action of blind, unintelligent forces. . . . Let us suppose that I have nearly completed the writing of these lectures, and have gone out for a walk, leaving my papers arranged, not perhaps in the order of perfect neatness, but in one in which I can readily refer to them. On my return I find the room swept out, and my papers arranged in an order perfectly pleasing to the eye, but in one in which the connection of the sense of what I have written has been wholly disregarded. What is the certain inference which I draw from this state of things? Clearly, that an intelligent agent has been meddling

with my papers during my absence. Of this I feel as certain as if I saw the person do so with my eyes. But let us suppose that I am rather angry at this state of things, and call the servant and ask why she has been disturbing my papers. She tells me that she opened the window, and the wind blew them into the form in which I now find them. This account of the matter I should consider an insult to my understanding, being certain that such a result could not have been brought about by the action of the blind forces of nature, but that the order in which I find them proves that it must have resulted from the presence of intelligence. In a similar manner, when I survey the universe, and observe its orderly arrangements, the conviction becomes irresistible that they cannot have resulted from the action of its blind forces, but that the result has been effected by their action having been directed and controlled by an intelligent mind.—*C. A. Row.*

293. Closely allied to this is the argument from adaptation. By the word "adaptation" we mean a number of distinct things meeting together at the right time and place, which by their conjoint action produce a definite result, which result would have had no existence apart from their conjoint action. An illustration will make this plain. A machine is an adaptation—such, for example, as a locomotive. It consists of a number of distinct and separate parts—the boiler, the condenser, the piston, the furnace, the wheels, etc.; and the water and the fire to generate the steam. These are so combined together that by their joint action they produce a particular result. To effect this the parts must meet together at the right time and place. If any one of them had been different from what it is, the result would be different. Whenever we witness such combinations, our minds cannot help drawing the inference that their existence cannot have been due to the action of unintelligent forces, but that they must have originated in intelligent volition.—*C. A. Row.*

EXCUSES

294. One cannot fail to notice that, when asked for reasons why decision for Christ is delayed, or Christian work unattended to, so few make any frank confession of fault. Replies are

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usually of the nature of the excuse of the man in the parable: "I have bought a field, and I must *needs* go and see it; I pray thee have me excused" (Luke 14:18). So, what is optional is raised to the level of positive duty. A man wants to go that way, instead of answering the call of Christ, so the wish is father to the thought, and the excuse offered, "I must *needs* go."

It can scarcely be said that by callous wickedness men usually exclude themselves from Christ's Kingdom, or neglect Christian duties. The more common reason is careless indifference. The affairs of the world are so pressing. Men hear the divine summons, "Go, work in my vineyard," but there are other calls they hear; there is other work to do.

Never yet was a good excuse offered for indifference to the claims of Christ, or the neglect of Christian duty. Men need to realise that to accept Christ and serve Him is the greatest business of life. "Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). Attention needs diverting from self, one's feelings, business or pleasure, and turned to the consideration of the reasonableness of religious requirements. Men need frequent reminders that with every pulse-beat they are getting worse; every breath is bringing them nearer to life's close. The last call will soon be heard; then, if they still have excuse to offer, they shall be numbered amongst the rejected. "For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper" (Luke 14:24).

295. Helpful passages for those who give excuses:

1. *Those who are good enough.* Rom. 3:10; Luke 16:15; Luke 18:9-14.
2. *Those who are too bad.* Isa. 1:18; Luke 19:10; Heb. 7:25.
3. *Those who are waiting to get better.* Matt. 9:12, 13; John 1:29; Tit. 3:5.
4. *Those who are afraid they will fail.* 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Pet. 4:19; Jude 24.
5. *Those who are waiting for feeling.* Rom. 10:17; John 5:24; John 6:37.
6. *Those who stumble at inconsistent Christians.* Matt. 7:1-5; John 21:21, 22; Rom. 14:12.

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7. *Those who await a more convenient season.* Prov. 27:1; Isa. 55:6, 7; 2 Cor. 6:2.

8. *Those who are backsliders.* Jer. 2:19; 1 John 1:9; Luke 15:11-24.—*C. H. Scoville.*

296. If God only took men at their word, and swept all who had excuses into their graves, one would find very few people left. The grass would be growing in the streets, and the few living would be employed in burying the dead.—*D. L. Moody.*

297. "Men take refuge in their flimsy, threadbare excuses, which they feel, even as they utter them, are not the real reason for their refusal of Christ. I do not say that there are none who feel they have good reasons for refusing the invitations of the gospel, but the majority of cases are of the class indicated. Do you want proof of this? Note the *manner* in which excuses are usually given. They are uttered in such a languid way, with such an air of one who feels that he must say something, and that 'a lame excuse is better than none,' that one cannot always regard them as serious."

298. I have often wondered at the cleverness with which people make excuses for neglecting heavenly things. A poor woman was explaining to me why her husband did not attend church. "You see, poor working folks nowadays are so holden down and wearied out that they are glad to rest a day in the house when Sunday comes." An unopened letter was lying on the table, which she asked me to read, believing that it was from her sick mother. It was a notice to her husband that the football team, of which he was captain, was to meet on Saturday at 3 P. M., and that, like a good fellow, he must be forward in good time. And that was the man for whom my pity was asked, as being so worn out with his work that he could hardly creep up to the church. Another woman admitted to me that she never read her Bible, but pleaded that she was too busy and had too many cares. My eye caught a great bundle of journals above the clock. She confessed that these were novels, on which she spent two and a half pence every Saturday, and that she read them on the Sunday. If you wish an excuse, the

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smallest thing will give you stuff enough for the weaving of it.
—*Wells*.

299. D. L. Moody told of a woman who came to her minister, and said: "I'm afraid I can't hold out." He replied: "You don't need to: a clock can only make one tick at a time; you can't be very different," etc. She presented a clock to Moody, and herself to Jesus."—*C. R. Scoville*.

300. "A minister was talking to a man in an enquiry-room one evening, who said, 'My heart is so hard; it seems as if it was chained, and I cannot come.' The minister replied, 'Come along, chain and all;,' and he just came along, chain and all, and Christ snapped the fetters, and set him free."

301. In the parable, one said: "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it." What a fool he was to buy his land before he saw it! Another excused himself because he had bought some oxen, and he was going to *prove* if they were good and could draw well. What a fool he was, too, buying his oxen first and then proving them, instead of proving first and buying afterwards! A third could not come because he had *married a wife*! But he should have come, and brought his wife along with him.—*Newman Hall*.

302. The excuse, in our Lord's parable, of the new land typifies the allurements of wealth and wealth-seeking. The excuse of the oxen typifies the fascination of work, the business care which chokes the good seed. The excuse of the wife typifies social pleasures of all kinds. Note that "not one of them was kept away by occupations *sinful in themselves*." The root of the whole matter was *indifference*. Had they cared enough, they could have gone.—*Morrison*.

Men do not attend to the call of God, because there is some other call which they like better.—*Peloubet*.

303. There are those who never can be surprised into a frank confession. They are always armed against blame. The fault was not theirs; they were interrupted; they were tired; they thought they knew it; they thought they should have had time;

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they had meant to get up early; they had learned every part of the lesson but that one line; they could have answered everything but that one question; they were only just late; they forgot—anything but a frank admission of fault.—*Vaughan.*

304. The most foolish of all excuses are those offered for not becoming a Christian: "I am not good enough"—when Christ came to call, not the righteous, but sinners. "There are lots of good people outside the church"—but they are not so good as they would be inside it. "Some day, but not now"—when now is the only time you own. "I am afraid I shouldn't hold out"—but Christ would hold out. There never yet was a good excuse for failure to do a single duty, least of all the greatest of all duties, the following of Jesus Christ.—*Peloubet.*

305. I met a fellow-man, the other day, who was very severe on another who had failed to pay a debt due to him, and who puffed up as he said, with a good deal of fervour, "I pay as I go." This suggested some questions, and I began to fire them at him.

"How much did you pay the preacher last year?" "Nothing, 'cause I don't owe him anything." "What did you contribute to missionary work during the year?" "Not a cent; it is none of my business." "What did you give to charity last year?" "Nothing; I believe in charity beginning at home." "What have you contributed to the support of disabled soldiers?" "Not a dime. Let the state care for them." "What taxes did you pay on money you have loaned out?" "Not a penny. That's none of the Government's concern." "Did you help that cripple begging in our community the other day?" "No. Let all such go to the free hospital." "Did you ever contribute to the support of a free hospital?" "No. It is no home of mine, and I don't ask shelter from any of them." "Did you offer to help the poor widow who lived near you, and whom you know to be in want?" "No, for the poorhouse is the place for all such." "Did you help nurse that neighbour who suffered such long and painful illness?" "No. Doctors and nurses are paid for that work." "Did you welcome the stranger you saw in church last Sunday?" "No. Let the ushers attend to that." "Did you ever give a

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word of cheer to a discouraged brother man?" "No. Don't ever bother with such folks." "Did you ever speak a word of sympathy to a sorrowing soul?" "Never did, and never expect to." "Did you ever offer a hand to a fallen fellow-man?" "No. My hands are busy at work." "And yet you say you pay as you go!"

Hopelessly insolvent! Criminally in debt! Many times a bankrupt! Selfish spendthrift! Faithless to a high and sacred trust! Cowardly dodger of duty! False to God and man! Miserable miser! Repent! Ask for mercy, or soon you will stand in the presence of a Judge, and be pronounced an eternal bankrupt.—*Selected by J. E. Denton.*

FAITH

306. Faith is a principle of action. Every little infidel or agnostic we meet or hear of enjoys a sneer, when reading the record of Hebrews 11; but this they conveniently forget: the same principle is the one they act upon in every-day life. Let the sneering infidel lose faith in society, and he may put up his shutters as soon as he pleases, and the sooner the better. Let faith cease, and the wheels of traffic will soon cease, the foundations of society will be broken up. All men have faith; but the trouble is, so few have faith in God. Even the scoffing infidel does not take a single step into the dark, or move a hand, without faith; but here is the difference between him and those worthies of Hebrews: they put out their hands in the dark, and clasped another hand, the hand of God. Our faith is like the world's faith, in kind, but, thank God, it is glorified in object, and so made divine.

307. What is faith? We need not waste words. Faith in Christ is just the same as faith in anything or any one else. I suppose we all know what it is to have faith in any one. We *trust* him. A father one day was asked by his little girl what faith was. He placed her on the sill of a window, and, standing below with his arms open, bade her leap into his arms. She did so at once. She trusted him to catch her in safety. He told her that faith in Christ was just to trust in Christ as she trusted in her father. We exercise this trust in our fellow-men

every day. We rush to the railway station, get our ticket, and are presently being whirled through the country at express speed. It seems wonderful that we should have such *confidence*—another word that gives the essence of faith—in railway companies. Yet this great faith is exercised every day.—*Lancelot Oliver*.

308. There are those who belittle faith, and say if one's conduct is correct, it matters little what he believes. This is illogical. Some of you may be lawyers. When a man becomes your client and entrusts you with a case, you insist that he should put implicit trust in you as a person and put you in possession of all the facts without reservation. He must make a clean breast of it. He must exercise the fullest confidence in you. It makes all the difference in the world whether or not he exercises faith in you as an advocate. So with Christ, your Saviour and Advocate. He is to be received with absolute faith. He reveals Himself as Intercessor. Believe it. He is the Resurrection and the Life. Believe it. He is your Judge, and promises that if you truly trust Him you "may have boldness in that day." Believe it, and it shall be well with you. God is just, but the Justifier of all them who put themselves in the hands of Jesus. Hearty confidence will lead to right and resolute action.—*C. O. Brown*.

309. FAITH IN CHRIST INDISPENSABLE.—Not long ago a man said to me, "I cannot believe." "Whom?" I asked. He stammered, and said again, "I cannot believe." I said, "Whom?" "Well," he said, "I *can't* believe." "Whom?" I asked again. At last he said, "I cannot believe myself." "Well, you don't need to. You do not need to put any confidence in yourself. The less you believe in yourself, the better. But if you tell me you can't believe God, that is another thing, and I would like to ask you why!"—*D. L. Moody*.

310. Paul never said, "I know *what* I believe," but, "I know *whom* I believe."—*C. R. Scoville*.

311. "This saying, 'I will not believe unless I see,' is a great sin. God has chosen to save men, not by sight, but by faith: not

by seeing, but by believing. He who turns away from this and says, 'Nay, not faith, but sight for me,' is going contrary to the gospel of the grace of God. One who thus said, 'I cannot believe that anything is real but that which I can see,' was holding a conversation with a Christian missionary. The man of God answered, 'Then, I cannot hold any further discussion with you at all.' 'Why not?' said the man. 'Because,' said the servant of God, 'I only care to converse with intelligent men.' The man colored up. 'I demand to know your meaning.' The missionary replied, 'I like to talk with a man with brains, and *you* will not admit you have any, for *you certainly never saw them.*' He who will not believe in anything but what he can see is not only going contrary to the will of God, but also to the demands of common sense. He credits nothing to the omnipotence of God. 'Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.' Here is God's own chosen way for the soul to pass from death unto life."

312. Seeing is not always believing. Yonder traveller in the desert, as he is about perishing of thirst, thinks he sees a well of water and trees in the distance. He leads his fainting camel to the spot, but, alas! it is a mirage in the desert. When he reaches the spot there is nothing but a heap of sand, and he and his weary beast sink down to die. The senses may be mistaken—seeing is not always believing. There was one who came up for examination (I think it was for the navy), and he was asked, as his examiner held up a watch, "Can you hear this watch tick?" "Yes," said the man. Then the examiner took it back a farther distance and said to the man, "Can you hear it now?" "Yes," said the man again. "Well," said the examiner, "you are a clever fellow, for *the watch stopped two months ago.*" We are not sure whether, in that case, a positive lie was told, or whether, in his eagerness, the man thought he heard the ticking of the watch, and so his senses deceived him. Not so with faith. When a man grounds his confidence upon the word of his God, *that* can never deceive him. Although the eye may have been deceived, and the ear may have been deceived (as in Isaac's day), yet faith can never be deceived when it is founded upon the word and the truth of Jehovah Himself.—*William Olney.*

313. DEAD FAITH.—The word of God tells you distinctly what sort of faith dead faith is. Jas. 2:17, 20, 26, says: "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, *being alone*." "Wilt thou know, O vain man, that *faith without works is dead*?" "As the body without the spirit is dead, so *faith without works is dead also*." We all know that that which is dead is inoperative, unproductive, fruitless. If, then, your faith is of this character, there can be no doubt that it is dead, and, as this apostle teaches, can neither justify nor save you.—*T. H. Milner*.

FAITHFULNESS

314. When we consider their faithfulness, can we wonder that the apostle eulogises the ancient worthies of Hebrews 11? They are held in sacred memory for what they have done. The mists of the ages wrap in folds of forgetfulness other men, but no distance dims these from our view; others, like a comet that blazes out for a moment, and then smoulders down into complete invisibility, suddenly appear, and then sink down into the darkness from which they emanate, but these shine out like the sun of the heavens. The world recounts great exploits of intellectual research and scientific discovery, but all must bow before a more illustrious throng "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mightily in war, and turned to flight armies of aliens" (Heb. 11:33, 34). Scientists and philosophers must confess themselves outdone. These worthies ventured much, and accomplished much. Duty bade them go, and they went. Danger did not hold them back, death did not affright them.

Such faithfulness, amid adverse circumstances, is needed to-day. Quite easy is it to be faithful when we can see, and to trust when all is fair. But, to note no quarter from which light can come, and yet to go on in calm assurance that it will come; to dip into the deepest darkness of the "valley of the shadow of death," fearing no evil; to climb the steep mountain, scaling the rugged rocks to the highest point to which He calls—that is faithfulness, and it will not lose its reward, for in the mount the Lord will appear.

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315. God doesn't demand success of any man on earth, but does demand faithfulness. Indeed, faithfulness is success.

316. Judson preached to the Buddhists in Burmah for six years without a convert. Every first Sunday he and his devoted wife would celebrate the Lord's Supper, and would say at the conclusion: "We are the church of Jesus in Burmah." Somebody wrote to Mr. Judson, after he had been there five years, to know what were the prospects for the conversion of the heathen. He answered: "As bright as the promises of God."

317. A gunner, describing the intense moment just before the new recruits came up under Blucher that turned that decisive battle of modern times, said that moment seemed ages, and the dust and smoke of the battle were so thick and intense that the gunner, as he stood on the height on which he had been placed by the commanding officer, could not see five yards in front of him. He felt the swaying tides of the battle move this way and that, and he did not know at one time whether he was among friend or foe. Some one asked him: "Well, my friend, what did you do in that supreme hour of darkness and solitude?" "I stood by my guns," said he. That is all you and I have to do. We are not responsible for the swaying tides of battle: we are not responsible for apparent defeat or apparent failure. The question is, Am I where God puts me, and do I do as God would have me do?—*A. T. Pierson.*

318. Archbishop Trench tells in rhyme the story of the man who went away from home, leaving in the care of two of his neighbours two sacks of grain. One deposited his in his cellar, the other planted a field. The man returned after a time and called for his property. The one returned the sack, which, when opened, disclosed a decayed and putrid mass upon which worms were feeding. The other showed him fields of golden grain ready for harvesting. The owner expressed his pleasure with the latter, took two sacks of grain, and left the rest as the rightful reward of sagacity and faithfulness.

319. "It is said that George III. was a man of firm convictions. His speech on the Roman Catholic question shows his

character: 'I can give up my crown, and retire from power; I can quit my palace, and live in a cottage; I can lay my head on a block, and lose my life; but I cannot break my oath.'"

320. The fidelity of the keepers of the lighthouse once on Minot's Ledge, near Boston, may well be imitated. In the terrible gale of 1851 this beautiful structure was destroyed. Two men were in it at the time, and a vast multitude had gathered on shore apprehending calamity. Still the bell tolled and the light flashed. No howling blast could silence the one nor rising wave extinguish the other. At last one giant wave levelled the mighty structure, and the last thing that was heard was the sound of the bell, and the last thing that was seen was the flash of the light.—*J. M. Reid.*

FORGIVENESS

321. Divine rules of forgiveness are laid down in the Scriptures. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4: 32). "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12: 20, 21). "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6: 14, 15).

So that forgiveness may be looked for only by those who observe these rules absolutely. Prayers for pardon reach no higher than the roof unless the petitioner is willing to forgive those who have offended him. Such a prayer, offered by an unforgiving man, is tantamount to a request that the Almighty should take vengeance upon him, and be unrelenting in spite of pleadings for pardon.

To refuse to forgive others not only prevents God from forgiving us, but is a sure indication of utter weakness and impotence of Christian character. To forgive is to be godlike. He who refuses to forgive shall sink lower than the level of the beast.

Alex. Maclaren says: "The true way to overcome evil is to

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melt it by fiery coals of gentleness. That is God's way. An iceberg may be crushed to powder, but every fragment is still ice. Only sunshine that melts it will turn it into sweet water. Love is conqueror, and the only conqueror, and its conquest is to transform hate into love."

322. Let us be silent as to each other's weakness; helpful, tolerant, nay, tender, towards each other! Oh, if we cannot feel tenderness, may we at least feel pity! May we put away from us the satire which scourges and the anger which brands; the oil and wine of the good Samaritan are of more avail. We may make the ideal a reason for contempt; but it is more beautiful to make it a reason for tenderness.—*Henry F. Amiel.*

323. "It is wonderful what care some good people take to get all the pain and suffering they can out of an offence. A grain of sand blows into their eye, slips under their eyelid, and they keep it there till the whole eye is inflamed; they rub it with their finger till the torture becomes unbearable. They might have brushed it away and have done with it; but, no! the hasty, bitter word, the selfish act, of which a relative, a friend, an acquaintance, was guilty, they lay up in their memory; and they will not forget it, whatever else they forget. About the many kindly things he has done, and the many kindly words he has said, they never think, but the one offence is always present to them."

324. D. L. Moody said: "They who say they will forgive, but cannot forget an injury, simply bury the hatchet, while they leave the handle out, ready for immediate use."

325. Joseph Parker said: "The great man is always ready to find an excuse for the injury that is done him, if he possibly can."

326. In Victor Hugo's story, "Les Miserables," a notable character, Jean Valjean, is convicted of stealing a loaf for his sister's hungry children. He was imprisoned for two years. He tried to escape, and his imprisonment was lengthened to nineteen years. Then, upon his release, he found all society

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against him. A certain bishop befriended him, and in his honour he placed the silver candlesticks on the table. The ex-convict stole them, and decamped. He was caught. The bishop *forgave* him, and gave him the candlesticks. That had such an impression upon him that he was transformed.

327. Sir Matthew Hale was once asked if it would not be gallant and honourable to resent a certain injury. "Yes," was the reply, "but it would be godlike to forgive it."

328. King Henry VI. of England had it said of him: "He never forgot anything but injuries." And to Cranmer it was said: "If you want to get a favour from him, do him a wrong." The highest eulogy ever paid President Lincoln was that of Emerson, when he said: "His heart was as great as the world, but there was no room in it to hold the memory of a wrong." Luther said: "Whenever I look at Peter, my very heart leaps for joy. If I could paint a portrait of Peter, I would paint upon every hair of his head, 'I believe in the forgiveness of sin.'" C. H. Spurgeon gives the following advice: "Cultivate forbearance till your heart yields a fine crop of it. Pray for a short memory as to all unkindness." A little blind girl, when asked what forgiveness is, replied: "It is the odour that flowers breathe when trampled upon."

329. "During the American Revolution a Dunker leader named Miller was grievously insulted by a man named Wildman, who was afterwards sentenced to be hanged as a British spy. Miller went to General Washington and begged for Wildman's life. The commander-in-chief replied: 'I should like to release Wildman because he is your friend, but I cannot, even for that consideration.' 'Friend,' cried Miller; 'he is not my friend; he is only my enemy, and therefore I want to save him.' The General was so touched that he forgave the man."

330. One day, when the horse of a good man in Massachusetts happened to stray into the road, a church neighbour put the animal into the public pound. Meeting the owner soon after, he told him what he had done, and added, "If I catch him in the road after this, I'll do just so again." "Neighbour," replied

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the other, "a night or two ago I looked out of my window, and saw your cattle in my meadow, and I drove them out and shut them in your yard, and if ever I catch them there at any time, I'll do it again." The man was so struck with the reply that he at once took the horse out of the pound, and paid the charges himself.—*Charles Jerdon*.

331. A friend once showed Ruskin a costly handkerchief on which a blot of ink had been made. "Nothing can be done with that," said his friend, thinking the handkerchief ruined and worthless. Ruskin made no reply, but carried it away with him. After awhile he sent it back, to the surprise of his friend, who could scarcely recognise it. In a most skilful and artistic way he had made a fine design in Indian ink, using the blot as a basis, making the handkerchief as valuable as ever. A blotted life is not hopelessly a useless life. If Ruskin could make a beautiful and valuable handkerchief out of a blotted one, how much more can the Master Himself make a beautiful and useful life out of one that is blotted by sin, if only it is surrendered to Him.—*Peloubet*.

332. "What can Jesus Christ do for you now?" said an inhuman slave-master, when in the act of applying the lacerating whip to an already half-murdered slave. "Him teach me to forgive you, massa," was his reply.—*Philips*.

333. "Dr. Lawson, of Selkirk, a famous Scottish wit, as a wise and godly minister, was once approached by a busybody who wanted, with an air of great solemnity, to tell him of the wrong-doing of a brother in the church. The good minister turned to him and asked, 'Does anybody else know this but you?' 'No, sir,' was the answer. 'Have you told it to anybody else?' Again the answer was 'No.' 'Then,' said the good man, 'go home and hide it away at the feet of Jesus, and never speak of it again unless God leads you to speak to the man himself. If the Lord wants you to bring a scandal upon His church, let Him do it, but don't you be the instrument to cause it.'"

334. H. W. Beecher says: "There is an ugly kind of forgiveness in this world—a kind of hedgehog forgiveness, shot out

like quills. Men take one who has offended, and set him down before the blowpipe of their indignation, and scorch him and burn his fault into him; and when they have kneaded him sufficiently with their fiery fists, then—they forgive him."

335. Once there was an artisan who laboured for a rich Eastern master. By imprudence he got into an immense debt with an unmerciful creditor, who told him that, unless he settled accounts before the close of the year, he and his family should be sold as slaves. It was impossible for the poor man to pay the debt. He might quite as well have tried to build up a tower like that of Babel in one night. Meanwhile, his master noticed that his work was falling off every week, and was not so clever and accurate as it used to be. One day he spoke about this to the steward. "Why, sir," the steward replied, "that poor fellow cannot possibly make good work. He cannot manage his tools, for his hands tremble. Nor can he see well what he is doing, for his eyes are often filled with tears. He often sits down as in despair, and sighs heavily; and sometimes he makes himself drunk, to forget his misery. A heavy debt is pressing upon him, sir, and until it is paid he will not be able to make one good piece of work." "Tell him, then, that I have paid his debt," the generous master said. The steward went up to the servant and delivered the message. Picture to yourselves the joy of that poor man. From that moment fresh vigour was poured into his veins. His hands trembled no more, nor were his eyes dimmed with tears. He swung his hammer with a will, so that it was a pleasure to see him. His little dwelling rang with his merry songs, and he made his work quicker and better than ever before.—*Dr. Guthrie.*

336. "A minister from New Zealand tells of a black man, recently converted, who was taking part in a communion service. The preacher, after awhile, saw him looking intently and wildly at the man by his side, and then in great agitation he arose and fled into the forest. Presently he returned, and, quietly taking the same place, finished the communion, eating from the same loaf and drinking from the same cup with the man from whose

presence he had just fled. After the service the minister enquired the cause of his strange conduct, and the man told him that in the one by his side he recognised the one who had long ago slain his father and that he had sworn a great oath of revenge. But in the meantime he had been converted, yet when he saw the man there he remembered the murder and his oath, and the old hatred awoke within him, and so great was the temptation that came over him that it drove him out into the bush, where the evil one assailed him, but upon his knees he conquered through the power of a will renewed by the Spirit of God."

FREEDOM

337. Freedom is not the power to do as we please, unless we please to do as we ought. The Scriptural condition of freedom should be noted. "He that was called in the Lord, being a bondservant, is the Lord's freedman" (1 Cor. 7:22). Freedom is conditional upon association with the Lord Jesus. Those who have answered the call of the gospel are the "Lord's freedmen." Jesus said: "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32). "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (v. 36). The most perfect liberty exists where there is the fullest surrender to the divine will.

Note the purpose of our freedom. We are free to serve: "Likewise he that is called, being free, is Christ's bondservant" (1 Cor. 7:23).

The liberty of worldlings often leads to lawlessness. The Christian takes heed, "lest by any means this liberty becomes a stumblingblock to the weak" (1 Cor. 8:9). The man of the world may boast of being a "freethinker." The man of God desires that even his views shall not clash with divine revelation. "The truth shall make you free."

True liberty is a priceless blessing.

"Better to sit in Freedom's hall,
With cold, damp feet, and mouldering wall,
Than bend the neck, and bow the knee,
In the proudest palace of slavery."

338. Rejoice in your liberty, but in your lawful liberty. True freedom consists with the observance of law. Adam was as free in paradise as in the wilds to which he was banished for his transgression. I hold that true freedom and the observance of law are perfectly consistent with each other.—*W. L. Thornton.*

339. He that is good is free, though he be a slave; and he that is evil is a slave, though he be a king.—*Augustine.*

340. "There is no liberty but in the gospel, no equality but in the truth, no fraternity but in Jesus."

341. "In the days of what was called 'the underground railway' in America, poor slaves in the South were often got away from their slavery by secret means. They were hid in cellars and garrets, and then conveyed at midnight across the land from one hospitable house to another. A poor fellow had found his way to Canada, and, of course, on British territory, was a free man. As the train moved into Toronto, Harriet Tubman, herself an emancipated slave who had helped hundreds of others to freedom, went in and saw him crouching down in a corner, mortally afraid that some slave-owner might be after him. 'Joe, you fool,' she said, 'what are you crouching there for? You have shaken off the lion's paw; you are a free man on free soil. Praise the Lord, Joe!' Jesus Christ has purchased our liberty (Gal. 5:1)."

342. On my lawn is a goat tethered by a rope to a stake. He is not at liberty. Why not cut the rope and let him go where, and do as, he pleases? Because if I do he will gnaw the bark of the young trees, trample down the garden-beds, pull up the strawberry plants by the roots. In a word, because he is not able to perceive and be obedient to the invisible law, he must be subjected to a visible and tangible one. But I have a collie dog who has learned obedience, and has acquired his right to liberty.—*Dr. Lyman Abbott.*

343. In the British colonies, before the time of Wilberforce, there used to be a great many slaves, but that good man began

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to agitate the question of setting them free; and when they heard of it they were very anxious to know how he was getting along. The slaves used to watch for the white sails of British ships, hoping to hear good news, but fearing they might hear bad news. There was a ship which had sailed immediately after the emancipation act had been passed and signed by the king; and when she came within hailing distance of the boats which had put off from the shore at the port where she was bound, the captain could not wait to deliver the message officially, and have it duly promulgated by the Government, but, seeing the poor, anxious men standing up in their boats, eager for the news, as are all slaves who have suffered, he placed his trumpet to his mouth, and shouted with all his might, "Free! Free!"—*D. L. Moody.*

344. "Would you be free? 'Tis your chief wish, you say:
Come on: I'll show thee, friend, the certain way:
If to no feasts abroad thou lov'st to go,
Whilst bounteous God does bread at home bestow;
If thou the goodness of thy clothes dost prize
By thine own use, and not by others' eyes;
If (only safe from weathers) thou canst dwell
In a small house, but a convenient shell;
If thou without a sigh, or golden wish,
Canst look upon thy beechen bowl and dish;
If in thy mind such power and greatness be—
The Persian king's a slave compar'd with thee."

345. Once, in the company of Adoniram Judson, some friends were repeating anecdotes of what different men in different ages regarded as the highest type of human happiness. He said: "Pooh! these men were not qualified to judge. I know of a much higher pleasure than that. What do you think of floating down the Irrawaddy, on a cool moonlight evening, with your wife by your side and your child in your arms, *free—all free?* But you cannot understand it either; it needs twenty-one months' experience in a Burman prison to understand that; but I never regret the twenty-one months when I recall that one delicious thrill. I think I have a better appreciation of what heaven may be ever since."—*Archibald McLean.*

Heaven will be freedom from sin, pain, anxiety, selfishness, and everything foreign to the soul's highest interests and joy.

FRIENDSHIP

346. Wickliff said that Jesus chose out twelve men "that he might be homely with them." Jesus said to His disciples: "No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends" (John 15: 15). "A disciple is not above his master," and, like Him, needs the fellowship of kindred minds.

The companionship of worldlings is harmful to spiritual life. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" (Jas. 4:4). "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away" (Prov. 4:14, 15). It has been said: "Egypt will teach even a Joseph to swear; a Peter will learn to swear in the high-priest's hall. A good example hath not so much power to make us good, as a bad one hath to make us evil. One man sick of the plague will sooner infect ten sound ones than ten sound men can cure him."

To secure a true friend, and retain him, one must be friendly. Thus Ovid wrote: "The way to be beloved is to be lovely." Emerson said: "The only way to have a friend is to be one." Seneca put it thus: "If you wish to gain affection, bestow it."

By true friendship, we impart and receive happiness; we help each other. "A true friend unbosoms freely, advises justly, assists readily, adventures boldly: takes all patiently, defends courageously, and continues a friend unchangeably." "If you have a friend worth loving, love him. Yes, and let him know that you love him, ere life's evening tinge his brow with sunset glow."

347. The highest moment known on earth by the merely natural is that in which the mysterious union of heart with heart is felt. Call it friendship, love—what you will—that mystic blending of two souls in one, when self is lost and found again in the being of another; when, as it were, moving about in the darkness and loneliness of existence, we suddenly come in contact with something, and we find that spirit has touched spirit. This is the purest, serenest ecstasy of the merely human—more blessed than any sight that can be presented to the eye, or any

sound that can be given to the ear; more sublime than the sublimest dream ever conceived by genius in its most gifted hour, when the freest way was given to the shaping spirit of imagination. This has entered into the heart of man, yet this is of the lower still. It attains not to the things prepared by God—it dimly shadows them. Human love is but the faint type of that surpassing blessedness which belongs to those who love God.—*F. W. Robertson.*

348. What is a friend but one whom I can trust; one who, in sorrow's hour, will mingle his tears with mine; one on whose support I can reckon when my back is at the wall?—*Guthrie.*

349. Charles Kingsley, when asked the secret of his beautiful life, said: "I had a friend." Gather about you good, noble friends, by striving to be such a friend to others; above all, make God your friend, for truly, as James Whitcomb Riley says, "He passeth all the rest."—*Erickson.*

350. The little lad paused uncertainly in the doorway. "Mother," he said in troubled tones, "it's so far, and it's a new road to me. I—I'm not 'zactly afraid, but—couldn't you go a little way with me?" She caught the anxiousness of the childish appeal, and said quietly: "Mother'll go *all* the way with you, son." And so, his little brown hand in mother's, he walked the new way unafraid.—*Hart.*

351. In an address at a Methodist conference, J. D. Thompson told a story of Dr. Whyte, which he hoped was true, though its authenticity seemed somewhat doubtful. Certain hard and unfair things were being rumoured about Dr. Whyte. The Doctor appeared to take no notice. Some friends called to urge him to take decided measures to silence opponents. "Don't you know," said Dr. Whyte, "I must just have a little quiet dealing with myself to see what, in my old age, I have done to give them such an opinion about me." "But," said his friends, "they're saying the same things about Denny." Dr. Whyte blazed forth at once. "The scoundrels! the rascals!" he cried out.—*Christian World.*

352. When President Edwards came to die, his last words, after bidding his relations good-by, were: "Now, where is Jesus of Nazareth, my true and never-failing Friend?" And, so saying, he fell asleep.

353. "Pastor Jacobs, of Cambridgeport, could, when necessary, administer reproof very forcibly, though the gentleness of his character was always seen in the manner in which it was done. Some young ladies at his house were one day talking about one of their female friends. As he entered the room he heard the epithets 'odd' and 'singular' applied. He asked and was told the name of the young lady in question, and then said very gravely: 'Yes, she is an odd young lady; she is a *very* odd young lady. I consider her extremely singular.' He then added very impressively: '*She was never heard to speak ill of an absent friend.*' The rebuke was not forgotten by those who heard it."

354. "Colonel Byrd, of Virginia, fell into the hands of the Cherokees, and was condemned to death. In the tribe was a chief that had before been his friend. At the approach of the executioners he threw himself upon his intended victim, saying, 'This man is my friend; before you can get at him you must kill me,' which saved him."

355. When this church was being built I became acquainted with one of the carpenters—a plain man—who worked upon it, and I had many chats with him afterwards. That day, being a Christian (sometimes I am not one), when I met him, as he came down the street, I stopped and spoke to him, and shook hands with him. And giving me, as I noticed, a peculiar look, and keeping hold of my hand, he said: "Now, sir, you do not know how much good this does me." "What?" said I. "Well, your speaking to me and shaking hands with me," said he; "I shall go home to-night, and say to my wife, 'I met Mr. Beecher to-day.' 'Ah!' she will say; 'what did he say?' And the children will look up too. And I will tell them, 'He stopped and shook hands with me, and asked if I was getting along well.' And they will talk about that for a week. You have no idea how much good it does a plain man to be noticed, and to be made to feel that he is not a nobody."—*H. W. Beecher.*

GIVING

356. One hears a great deal about the "almighty dollar." Few question the power of money, though it can scarcely be considered almighty. For the furtherance of God's work, money is necessary. It is to be regretted that questionable methods of raising money, which should be freely given, are so commonly resorted to. The divine teaching upon the principles of finance is totally ignored. One would imagine, judging by popular methods of financing churches, that upon this question no law has been laid down.

Solomon says: "Honour the Lord with thy substance" (Prov. 3:9). The Jew, acting according to the requirements of the law, gave a tenth to the Lord. In addition to that, other offerings were presented, the amounts of which were not prescribed because, as now, men's circumstances differed, and what would be a liberal offering from some would be a mean gift from others. Under the Christian dispensation, general principles are laid down, the application of which is a matter of individual treatment. Knowing the tendency to fix the amounts of their offerings too low, our Lord has also furnished us with many examples of giving, which clearly indicate the kind of offerings which are acceptable to Him. So, we have the record of the liberality of the early disciples, who "had all things common" (Acts 2:44), even selling their possessions and goods, that they might supply the needs of their poor brethren. "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship [participation, sharing in common], in the breaking of bread, and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). They were taught that they should give cheerfully. "Not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). They were plainly told that "he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly: and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6).

It is to be feared that there is a marked contrast between the gifts of the first church and those of modern days. Some give even to the point of great sacrifice; others spend liberally on themselves, and give a mere pittance to the offering of the church, and nothing to make up for the Sundays when they were absent. That threepenny bit is their share of the cost of accommodation, preaching, advertising, giving to the poor, world-

wide evangelism, etc.!! The Jew was branded as a robber if he held back his tithe. Why should a Christian who robs God of his dues be considered a good saint? For such, a reckoning-day is coming. They must give an account.

357. The basis of Christ's teaching about money is the fundamental conception of *stewardship* (Luke 12:42; 16:1-8). Not only money, but every gift of God, is received in trust for His use. Man is not an owner, but a trustee, managing another's goods and estates, God being the one original and inalienable Owner of all. The two things required of stewards are that they be "faithful and wise," that they study to employ God's gifts with fidelity and sagacity—fidelity, so that God's entrustments be not perfected to self-indulgence: sagacity, so that they be converted into as large gains as possible.

This is a perfectly plain and simple basal principle, yet is not the accepted foundation of our money-making and money-using. The vast majority, even of disciples, practically leave God out of their thoughts when they engage in finance. Men consider themselves owners; they "make money" by their industry, economy, shrewdness, application; it is theirs to do as they will with it. . . . Hence there is no inconsistency felt in hoarding or spending vast sums for worldly ends and appropriating an insignificant fraction to benevolent purposes. Such methods and notions would be utterly turned upside down could men but think themselves as stewards, accountable to the one Master for having wasted his goods. The great day of account will bring an awful reckoning, not only to wasters, but to hoarders; for even the unfaithful servants brought back to their lord the talent and the pound at last, but without profit, and the condemnation was for not having used so as to increase the entrusted goods.—*A. T. Pierson.*

358. At the Centennial Convention of churches of Christ, held in Pittsburgh, U. S. A., 1909, Mr. W. H. Book said: "At one time I was in charge of a mission. The house of worship was about to be sold for debt, when an old brother, sound in the faith, came to our rescue with the promise of a loan at 10 per cent. and a mortgage on the house. This is what should have been placed on his tombstone:

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“ ‘Here lies old Ten Per Cent.;
The more he got, the less he spent;
The more he got, the more he craved;
If he gets to heaven, we will all be saved.’ ”

359. Many get all they can, and can all they get.—C. R. Scoville.

360. Timothy Coop, upon being asked how he could give so much, replied: “I shovel out, and the Lord shovels in, and He uses a bigger shovel than I do.”

361. A good brother I knew formed the habit of saving all the change he received in sixpenny and threepenny pieces, and forwarding the amount to missionaries annually for use in their work. Upon two separate occasions he called upon me, requesting me to forward his donation. After the first visit, upon opening the packet, I counted 109 sixpenny pieces and 229 threepenny pieces; total, £5 11. 9. If, at any time, he omitted to put by any change, he used to fine himself 100 per cent. This accounted for two of the coins being wrapped around by a piece of paper upon which were the words, “One hundred per. cent. fine.”

362. “A ship was sinking, and as the last boat was being lowered, the mate said he was going back for his purse. The captain expostulated, but the mate insisted. As he was gone on his errand the ship went down. By and by they found the dead body of the mate, his stiffened hand tightly grasping the fatal purse. And when they opened it, they found in it—*only thirty-six cents.*”

363. “A lady who refused to give after hearing a charity sermon had her pocket picked as she was leaving the church. On making the discovery she said: ‘The parson could not find the way to my pocket, but the devil did.’”

364. “At a missionary meeting in Africa a native Christian rose and said: ‘Enough of talking: let us do something.’ And, advancing to the communion table, he put down a modest

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half a crown. The impetus had been given. The whole assembly followed his example, and the movement spread to all other stations. The sum of £500 was raised in a very short time, without counting quantities of cattle—small and great."

365. "In the Bolenge mission, Africa, one named Joseph, a cripple, was baptised. He could not go to others, but they came to him at his invitation, and at the end of a year thirty savages, from seven warring districts, assembled around the table of the Lord. At the service one proposed that every member should tithe his income. To this they heartily agreed. Again this convert, once the child of paganism and superstition, arose and proposed that one out of every ten of their number give his entire time to heralding the glad tidings, and that these be supported by the other nine members in each group. This also was joyously accepted. After nine years the one station was multiplied to four, and the membership had grown from thirty-one to two thousand."

366. "An Indian one day asked Bishop Whipple to give him two one-dollar bills for a two-dollar note. The bishop asked 'Why?' He said: 'One dollar for me to give to Jesus, and one dollar for my wife to give.' The bishop asked him if it was all the money he had. He said, 'Yes.' The bishop was about to tell him, 'It is too much,' when an Indian clergyman, who was standing by, whispered: 'It might be too much for a white man to give, but it is not too much for an Indian who has this year heard for the first time of the love of Jesus.'"

367. A man was once asked for a donation for some church purpose, but excused himself by saying: "I'm fattening a calf, and when it's fat, I'll give the proceeds." The same excuse was given three times over in response to appeals. One day he was approaching church a little late, and heard the choir singing, "The half has never yet been told," and thought, in the distance, the words were, "The calf has never yet been sold." Conscience-stricken, he sold the calf, and gave the proceeds to the church.—*C. H. Scoville.*

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368. Who gives himself with his gifts feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me. —*Lowell.*

369. Two men were discussing the evidences of the Christian religion. The one was a Christian: the other not, and inclined to be sceptical. Arguments were freely exchanged. At last the sceptic, who was blunt and outspoken, said frankly to his friend and neighbor: "I think we might as well drop this matter. For I don't believe a word you say. And, more than that, I am quite satisfied in my own mind that you do not really believe it yourself. For to my certain knowledge you have not given, the last twenty years, as much for the spread of Christianity, such as the building of churches and foreign and domestic missions, as your last Durham cow cost. Why, sir, if I believed what you say you believe, I'd make the church my rule for giving, my farm the exception." That Christian man's life was contradicting every word he uttered to his neighbour. Money talks. His was talking very loudly to his sceptical neighbour. His neighbour was unusually frank in saying out what thousands are thinking. He had lost a great opportunity of winning his friend.—*S. D. Gordon.*

370. A little boy, sitting next to a lady in church, noticed that she had nothing for the collection-plate. His own collection was in his hand; but as the collector approached, the little fellow seemed greatly disturbed because his seatmate seemed entirely unprepared for the offering. When the steward got within a few pews' distance he handed over his silver piece to the lady, as he whispered in her ear: "Take this, and I will get under the seat till he goes by." Such sensitive souls as this boy are exceedingly rare.—*Ida R. Sausser.*

371. A wealthy man says that at the outset of his career, when he was earning a good salary, his hobby was a well-bred dog. Looking over his cash-book one day, he saw two adjacent entries. One was, "To Foreign Missions—2s 6d." The other, "To terrier pup—£5 5s 0d." There was no harm whatever in the latter entry. It was perfectly legitimate. The harm lay in its disproportion to the former. A man who could afford five

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guineas for a pup could afford more than a half a crown for the conversion of the heathen.—*David Smith.*

372. "A man, on behalf of a poor widow who had lost her cow, appealed to the neighbours for assistance. 'I feel for her with all my heart and soul,' said one. 'I don't doubt that,' said the widow's friend, 'but I want you to feel in your pocket.'"

373. A Russian legend tells of one who entered a diamond mine in search of great riches. He filled his pockets with great gems, and then threw them away to make room for larger ones. At length he became very thirsty, but there was no water there. He sought to find the way out, but was hopelessly lost in the intricate mazes. He heard the flow of water, but they were rivers of gems; and he hastened forward at the sound of a waterfall, but it was a cascade of jewels. He was very rich in precious stones, but he was dying of thirst, and his riches were worse than useless. He had lost himself and perished amid his treasures.—*Peloubet.*

374. "Ethel, feeling the service tedious, and thinking it high time for the collection, said: 'Oh, mother, do pay the man, and let's go home.'"

GOD

375. God is revealed in His names—Elohim (Creator), Shaddai (Almighty, with special reference to providential oversight), Elyon (Most High), Adonai (Lord), Yahweh (the eternal I Am), Father and Saviour. The Scriptures declare that God is a Spirit; that He is one—only good, only true, only wise—omnipotent, uncorruptible, everlasting. Holy and righteous, He is "no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34), and He "cannot be tempted with evil" (Jas. 1:13). We read of His goodness and His severity, His love and His wrath. His judgments are unsearchable, but they are true and righteous. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). But He is a God "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Ex. 34:6).

God was manifest in His Son. "He that hath seen me," said Jesus, "hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). The

promise was given that when the Son should go away, there would come "another Comforter"—the Spirit of truth, whom the Father would send in His name. God breathes in the Scripture (2 Tim. 3:10), which consequently is "quick and powerful."

God is revealed in His works. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

"O Lord, thou preservest man and beast. How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings" (Ps. 36:6, 7). God rules over "principalities and powers in heavenly places" (Eph. 3:10). He is "Lord of heaven and earth." "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Isa. 12:2). "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18). "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3).

With such a revelation of the Godhead, well might men heed the invitation expressed by the Psalmist: "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker" (Ps. 95:6).

376. In spite of all the seeming cruelties of this life; in spite of the clouded mystery in which God has shrouded Himself; in spite of pain, and the stern aspect of human life, and the gathering of thicker darkness and more solemn silence round the soul as life goes on—simply to believe that God is love, and to hold fast to that, as a man holds on to a rock with a desperate grip when the salt surf and the driving waves sweep over him and take the breath away—I say that is the one fight of Christian life, compared with which all else is easy: when we believe that, human affections are easy.

377. "Anything which makes religion the second object, makes religion *no* object. God will put up with a great many things in the human heart, but there is one thing He will *not* put up with. He who offers God a second place, offers Him no place. . . . He who makes religion his first object, makes it his whole object; he has no other work in the world than God's work."

378. "God! Thou art love! I build my faith on that!"

379. Isaac Errett once said: "A day in His presence is better than a thousand volumes on immanence."

380. "A Roman emperor, after a successful military campaign, was returning in triumph to Rome. Kings were chained to his chariot wheels as trophies of his triumph. He did not enter through the gates of the city. That was too common: all men did that. A breach was made in the walls for him to pass. Great throngs filled the city to welcome the mighty hero. And while passing through one of the crowded thoroughfares, a little girl, wild with joy, dashed toward his chariot. The police stopped her and said: 'That is the chariot of the emperor, and you must not attempt to reach him.' The little one replied: 'He may be your emperor, but he is my father;' and in a moment she was not only in the chariot, but also in the arms of her father. Even so is it with us. While God is the Emperor of all men, He is that, and infinitely more, to us; He is our Father."

381. There is in the Church of St. Peter's at Rome a very wonderful painting, but it is so far up in the heights of the great dome that the eye is unable to discern its marvellous beauty and significance. To overcome this difficulty, an ingenious arrangement was conceived by the idea of placing a large mirror near the floor, and there reflected in that mirror can be easily seen the great masterpiece. So, in like manner, the glory of God as seen in the heavenly heights by celestial beings we could not as mortals behold; but God has given us a manifestation, the epiphany of Himself, in His beloved Son, who has brought down in the mirror of the gospel the glory of the

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blessed God; and as we gaze upon His face in the mirror of the Word, the Holy Spirit transforms our lives into the same image from glory to glory.—*T. R. Coleman.*

382. Lowell tells a story of an ancient prophet who made a pilgrimage far into the wilderness until he reached the holy hill, Mount Sinai. He had lost the sense of God's presence, and had set out for the sacred mountain, confident that there, if anywhere, he should find it again. And so he stood on the hillside and prayed to God to give him a sign. He bowed his head, and waited for the answer to his prayer. He expected something wonderful, perhaps a loud peal of thunder. He heard nothing; not even a breath of air. But suddenly, while his eyes were cast on the ground at his feet, the tuft of moss before him burst open, and a little violet sprang up. In a moment it flashed upon him how blind he had been. He remembered that just before he left home his little daughter had come running to him to give him a nosegay of precisely the same flowers. They grew at his own door, and he had no need to come so far for them.—*W. Hetherington.*

383. "The fight is likely to be very bitter, Mr. Lincoln!" said one of his colleagues in the Civil War; "don't you think we had better get God on our side?" "No," replied Mr. Lincoln; "let us get on God's side."—*H. E. Knott.*

384. "An earthly father is not only interested in his boy's body and mind and soul—the large things—but in every minutest detail of his life. Even his ball and bat, and his tiniest toys, are objects of his interest and care. What he eats and wears, and where he goes; his companions and his books—everything pertaining to the life and character of his child, even though it be for a moment—is of intensest interest to him. Even so is it with our heavenly Father. The hairs of our head are numbered, and His angels are guardian spirits as we journey in life's way. When we are awake, and when we sleep; in the midst of foes as well as friends; when the sun is bright about us, and when storms dark and angry hover near—He is ever present to shield and comfort. What a glory to have this God at our side every moment of the week!"

385. "I have had the unspeakable joy of having been born and bred in a minister's family," said President Woodrow Wilson. "I remember one occasion which made a very profound impression upon me when I was a lad, in a company of gentlemen where my father was present, and where I happened to be unobserved. One of the gentlemen in a moment of excitement uttered an oath, and then, his eye resting upon my father, he said with evident sincerity: 'Dr. Wilson, I beg your pardon; I did not notice that you were present.' 'Oh,' said my father, 'you mistake, sir; it is not to me you owe the apology.' I doubt if any other one remark ever entered quite so straight to the quick in me as that did."

386. "An automobile racing at a speed of eighty miles an hour must take care of itself, for no human brain or eye can keep pace with it, yet men who know all the risks attending an unguided machine going eighty miles an hour will calmly tell you that a planetary system moving thousands of times as fast needs no guidance of God."

387. In the old castle at Edinburgh, the way to the crown jewels leads through a very humble doorway and through a very dingy and circuitous passage. The humble doorways of common duties are frequently the way to the room where God keeps His jewels.—*J. H. Jowett*.

388. A minister was dying. A brother minister said: "I know in whom I have believed," etc. He replied: "No, I don't want it put that way; I don't want even a preposition put between me and God. 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.'"—*C. R. Scoville*.

389. A Russian proverb says: "With God, go over every sea—without Him, not over the threshold." One has said: "He always wins who sides with God." When Felix of Nola was hotly pursued by murderers, he took refuge in a cave, and instantly over the rift of it the spiders wove their webs, and, glancing at this, the murderers passed by. Then said Felix: "Where God is not, a wall is but a spider's web; where God is, a

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spider's web is as a wall." Galileo, the most profound philosopher of his age, when questioned by the Inquisition as to his belief in a supreme Being, replied, pointing to a straw on the floor of his dungeon, that from the structure of that object alone he would infer with certainty the existence of an intelligent Creator.

390. G. Campbell Morgan says: "I confess that sometimes I am a little weary of hearing men talk about fellowship with God, as though fellowship with God meant the mountain height, and the place of loneliness, and the place of pleasant ecstasy of spirit. Fellowship with God means the *Via Dolorosa*, the way of the cross, and the sacrificial service of humanity."

GOSPEL

391. The announcement of salvation through Christ's atoning work is the good news which eclipses all others. It is a message for all men, of all ages and countries. None are excluded from the blessings of the gospel, save those who exclude themselves. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6: 37).

This message never grows old. It ever has been and ever will be music in the ears of the penitent. To Christians, its sweet voice never loses its charm. It is, like the One whose everlasting love it heralds, "the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever."

It gives just the message men need. It tells of a plan by which those who have sunk to the deepest depths of the miry pit may be lifted into the light, and placed upon the rock of safety. It speaks also to the moral, upright man, letting him know that in spite of continual progression in the arts and sciences, and the advance of civilisation, man's nature remains unchanged. Nothing can alter that, except the power of the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When this gospel is proclaimed, it has a separating effect. A division is made. The message results in the formation of two classes. It is "to the one a savour from death unto death; to the other a savour from life unto life" (2 Cor. 2: 16).

392. One of the oldest and most esteemed of our Australian evangelists recently exhorted his fellow-preachers to be sure to

deliver gospel messages. He did not mean by that a mere reiteration of "the terms of pardon," nor did he suggest that the preacher's reputation for orthodoxy should be gauged by the frequency of his use of the baptismal formula. Our brother was concerned with a bigger thing; he pleaded for a constant emphasis on the vital matters. He wished Christ and Him crucified to be the theme, Jesus to be exalted as Son of God and only Saviour, His atoning death to be presented, faith in Him to be induced, and the duty of obedience to Him, both in baptism and in a subsequent life of loving service, to be inculcated. No philosophies or literary production, no moral essay, no plea for social reform or civic righteousness, no war sermon, should be allowed to crowd out the simple word of the cross. . . . There are some churches in which the old gospel would seem as a new revelation. Nothing can take the place of the apostolic message, lovingly told. Jesus, as the Saviour of men to-day; Jesus, whose saving power has been manifestly experienced by the preacher; the Christ who died of old and who lives now—is, or should be, our constant theme.—*A. R. Main.*

393. The world has always had a great many more philosophers than it knew what to do with. Do not be proud, my young fellow, and pull your moustache, and put a glass on your eye, and talk about "philosophy." It is about the windiest of nonsense, and it has filled the ears of intellectual people for far too long a time. Philosophy has had its innings, and scored very little. We might give a chance to the gospel, might we not?—*J. McNeil.*

394. The well-known James Inglis was pastor of a large church in Detroit, U. S. A. He was a graduate of Edinburgh University and Divinity School, and was very learned. He was afterwards requested to act with the American New Testament Revision Committee. He was unusually eloquent, and he was having a most successful ministerial career. Indeed, he was the most popular preacher in Detroit, if not in Michigan, having large audiences on Sundays, with people seated in the aisles and upon the pulpit stairs of his church, and with his listeners hanging upon his words. One week-day, at this period, he sat in his

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study, preparing one of his sermons for the following Sunday, when a voice seemed to say to him: "James Inglis, whom are you preaching?" Mr. Inglis was startled, but he answered: "I am preaching good theology." But the voice seemed to reply: "I did not ask you what you are preaching, but whom are you preaching?" My uncle answered: "I am preaching the gospel." But the voice seemed again to reply: "I did not ask you what you are preaching; I asked you whom you are preaching." Mr. Inglis sat silent and with bowed head for a long time before he again replied. When he did, he raised his head and said: "O God, I am preaching James Inglis!" And then he added: "Henceforth I will preach no one but Christ, and Him crucified." Then my uncle arose, opened the chest in his study which contained his eloquent sermons, and deliberately put them one by one into the fire which was burning in his study stove. From that time on he turned his back upon every temptation to be oratorical and popular, preached simply and expositively, and gave himself in life and words to set forth Christ before men.—*H. W. Frost.*

395. Preach Christ. He is the *text*, and all preaching beside Christ is beside the text; therefore, keep to your text. Christ is the very foundation and subject-matter of preaching; and all preaching, without Christ, is building castles in the air. Christ is the life and soul of preaching; and all preaching, without Him, is like a body without life and spirit. Christ is the great end of preaching; and when Christ is not preached, the great end is lost.—*South.*

396. The whole duty of the whole church is to preach the whole gospel to the whole world.—*C. H. Scoville.*

397. Huber, the great naturalist, tells us that if a single wasp discovers a deposit of honey or food he will return to his nest and impart the good news to his comrades, who will sally forth in great numbers to partake of the fare which has been discovered for them. Shall we who have found honey in the rock Christ Jesus be less considerate of our fellow-men than wasps are of their fellow-insects?—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

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398. "‘How shall the full-blooded Indian be evangelised?’ was once asked. ‘Send after him a full-blooded gospel,’ was the reply."

399. Dr. Baldwin, who was pastor of a church in Troy for forty-one years, says: "With another I testify that at thirty, after examining as best I could the philosophies and religions of the world, I said: ‘Nothing is better than the gospel of Christ.’ At forty, when burdens began to press heavily, and years seemed to hasten, I said: ‘Nothing is as good as the gospel.’ At fifty, when there were empty chairs in my home, and the mound-builders had done me service, I said: ‘There is nothing to be compared with the gospel.’ At sixty, when my second sight saw through the illusions and vanities of earthly things, I said: ‘There is nothing but the gospel.’ At seventy, amid many limitations and deprivations, I sing:

" ‘Should all the forms which men devise,
Attack my faith with treacherous art,
I’d call them vanity and lies,
And bind the gospel to my heart.’ "

400. Some time ago an examination was made by means of the X-ray, and the search revealed more than was expected. A scrap of metal being embedded in the flesh of a lady’s hand, the light apparatus was used to locate the foreign substance. The rays, playing on the hand, showed, not only the exact position of the trouble, but disclosed as well the fact that a supposed valuable diamond ring upon the lady’s finger was studded with imitation rather than real stones. When the gospel searchlight shines into our hearts it discovers to us what we really are in God’s sight.

401. Many think the gospel is a very beautiful thing if you would only keep it at home; but the moment you try to apply it to anybody else it will not suit them. Try it upon the negro: "Well, the fact is, he is too low; he is not capable of being elevated to the height of Christianity." Try it upon the Brahman: "He is too high, far above; you cannot reach him." Each of these must have some particular religion adapted to himself; but one religion would not suit them all. A man looked into

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the eye of an Anglo-Saxon and found it black, and he said: "These are different organisations: you are not so bewildered as to think you can enlighten both these eyes with the same sun. You must have a sun for each of them; you must have different suns, you see, because the eyes are differently organised." Very well, that is exceedingly fine in theory, but try it—try whether the sun which God put in the heaven will not illuminate the pale eye of the Northerner and the dark eye of the Southerner.—*Arthur.*

402. Once, after Mrs. L. D. Garst, missionary in Japan, had been preaching to some women who listened with breathless eagerness, one said: "It's the first time I ever heard it." Mrs. Garst writes: "Did I imagine the pathos in her tone? Was it because the vast army, one billion strong, of those who have never heard the name of Jesus, rose before me, that my heart almost broke as I looked into that upturned face and heard the words, 'It's the first time I ever heard it'? Can we realise what a billion—one thousand million—means? Count the minutes since the giving of the great commission, and you will find that there will not have been a billion minutes till about 1935; not as many minutes in all those rolling years and centuries as there are now human beings who have not heard the name of our Christ."

403. Luther heard, one day, a nightingale singing very sweetly near a pond full of frogs, who, by their croaking, seemed as though they wanted to silence the melodious bird. The Doctor said: "Thus 'tis in the world: Jesus Christ is the nightingale, making the gospel to be heard; the heretics and false prophets, the frogs, trying to prevent his being heard."—*Luther's "Table Talk."*

404. A Hibernian sailor was once left in charge of the helm, with directions from the captain to keep his eye on a certain star, and steer the vessel directly towards it, which he promised faithfully to do. The captain went below, and fell asleep. After awhile he awoke, went on deck, and found the vessel sailing in a course exactly opposite to that in which he had directed the helmsman to steer. "What does all this mean, Patrick?" "Faith,

Captain, ye must pick me out another star, for *I've sailed clear by that one!*" Just so, many have turned their back on God, and heaven, and light, and peace, and think they have *sailed by* all the revelations of God, and want some one to pick them out another star.—*H. L. Hastings.*

GRACE

405. Cruden has defined grace as the "free and eternal love and favour of God, which is the spring of all the benefits which we as recipients receive from Him." Man can present no claim to God's favour: grace, though absolutely unmerited, is very freely bestowed, especially in redemption and sanctification. It was according to the eternal purpose of God "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7).

Grace is a characteristic of the Christian dispensation, "for the law was given by Moses," but "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). "A man is not justified by the works of the law," but by "faith in Christ," "because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16). Yet, whilst the law of Moses cannot justify, and even under the Christian dispensation no work can ever be done to merit grace, something may be done to receive it. "By works [of obedience] a man is justified, and not only by faith" (Jas. 2:24). Then, there are the good works of the gospel which must be attended to. Grace does its part, freely and without reward. God looks to us to do our part, and thus be "God's fellow-labourers" (1 Cor. 3:9). "As grace begins in God's love to us, so it ends in our love to Him."

406. Once upon a time, I met, on board an Australian liner, an aged man of genial temperament, and of sound and extensive learning. He managed to dwell in well-nigh perpetual sunshine, for he followed the sun round the globe year after year, and he was himself so sunny that the passengers made friends with him, and sought information from him. It fell out that, a discussion having arisen as to what "grace" was, some one said: "Let us ask 'The Walking Encyclopædia'; *he* will be sure to know." So to him they went with their enquiry as to the mean-

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ing of the theological term "grace." They returned woefully disappointed, for all he could say was: "I confess that I don't understand it." At the same time he volunteered the following extraordinary statement: "I don't think that they understand it either, who so often speak of it." Like the medical man of whom Pastor T. Phillips told in his Baptist World Congress sermon who said of grace, "It is utterly meaningless to me," this well-read traveller comprehended it not. . . . It chanced that on that same vessel was a Christian seaman, who, if he could not have given a concise and adequate definition of grace, nevertheless knew perfectly well its significance, and would have said, "Ay, ay, sir; that's it," with bounding heart and beaming face, if one had suggested that "grace is God's free, unmerited favour, graciously bestowed upon the unworthy and sinful." And if Mr. Phillips himself had been on board, and had preached his Congress sermon there, and had declared that "grace is something in God which is at the heart of all His redeeming activities, the downward stoop and reach of God, God bending from the heights of His majesty, to touch and grasp our insignificance and poverty," the weather-beaten sailor-man would have said within himself:

"Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be."

—*T. Spurgeon.*

407. Grace is energy. Grace is love-energy. Grace is a redeeming love-energy ministering to the unlovely, and endowing the unlovely with its one loveliness. . . . Yet we cannot really define it. Some minister of the cross, toiling in great loneliness, among a scattered and primitive people, and on the very fringe of dark primeval forests, sent me a little sample of his vast and wealthy environment. It was a bright and gaily colored wing of a native bird. The color and life of trackless leagues sampled within the confines of an envelope! And when we have made a compact little phrase to enshrine the secret of grace, I feel that, however fair and radiant it may be, we have only got a wing of a native bird, and bewildering stretches of wealth are untouched and unrevealed. No, we cannot define it.—*Jowett.*

408. "Have you grace enough to be burned at the stake?" was the question put to Mr. Moody, who answered in the nega-

tive. "Do you not wish that you had?" "No, sir, for I do not need it. What I need just now is grace to live in Milwaukee three days and hold a convention."—*The Quiver*.

409. "A gentleman and his little son were working together in the garden. To the latter was assigned the work of gathering up the loose stones and throwing them into a neighboring ditch. Finally he cried: 'There's one that I can't lift. I tried with all my might and couldn't lift it.' 'My son,' replied the father, 'you did not try with all your might, for I was here as a part of your might, and you did not ask me to help.' There are remedies and resources with God when all human physicians and strength fail. If we are God's children, those remedies belong to us."

410. "The superintendent of the United States Mint at San Francisco had a friend call on him one day. The friend said: 'I am puzzled about one thing. That is, why you people don't have more help. I should think people might come in here and overpower you and get a lot of this gold.' He said: 'Oh, that is all right. When I need help, all I have to do is to press this button.' The man who is filled with the Spirit knows how to get help, and to get it quickly."

411. There is a pathetic little story, illustrative of the sufficiency of God's grace, told by Ian Maclaren in an old number of *Frank Leslie's*: "If I dinna see," said a blind girl, and she spoke as if this was a matter of doubt and she was making a concession for argument's sake—"there's naeboddy in the glen can hear like me. There's no a footstep of a Dromtochty man comes to the door but that I ken his name, and there's no voice oot on the road that I cannot tell. The birds sing sweeter to me than to onybody else. I've lost naething; my life has been all getting."—*Mrs. R. W. Lowe*.

412. "The acts of breathing which I performed yesterday will not keep me alive to-day; I must continue to breathe afresh every moment, or animal life ceases. In like manner, yesterday's grace and spiritual strength must be renewed, from moment to moment, in order to my enjoying the consolations, and to my working the works, of God."

HEARERS

413. Good hearers are as necessary as good preachers. "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them" (Heb. 2:1). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16).

There are important duties enjoined upon hearers. They should discriminate between truth and error. Our Lord said: "Take heed what ye hear" (Mark 4:24). Paul said: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:8, 9). By comparing what men hear with what they read (in God's word), they can judge whether it is "the gospel" or "another." In political matters, few are so gullible as to believe all they hear, yet in religion men will, without question, accept as orthodox the word of any preacher.

Hearers must also cultivate the proper manner of hearing. Luke gives the utterance above referred to as "Take heed how ye hear" (Luke 8:18). Beware of a critical hearing, of occupying the "chair of the scorner"; sitting rather as a magistrate than a criminal. "Wherever there is a Paul to preach there will be a Tertullus to find fault." Hearers should not look so much to the vessel as to the priceless treasure it contains.

Inattention should be guarded against. Men are wide awake enough in business, but drowsy in religion. They never fall to sleep over their meals, but nod and slumber when the bread of life is being broken for hungry souls.

Men should not be half-day hearers. "Once-ers" are not a great help to Christ's cause. They put ease before religion; fleshly desires before the spiritual work of the church.

Lastly, care must be taken lest men should be mere hearers, and not "doers of the word" (Jas. 1:22).

414. What a mistake to imagine that, by hearing first one preacher and then another, we can derive benefit to our souls! More is wanted than such hearing. A raven may fly from cage

to cage, but it is not thereby changed into a dove. Go from room to room of the royal feast, and the sight of the tables will never stay the hunger. The main thing is to have and hold the truth personally and inwardly; if this be not the case, the hearer will die in his sins, albeit ten thousand voices should direct him the way of salvation.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

415. You may declare the most interesting or alarming truths to indifferent hearers, but they will remain as unmoved as the blacksmith's dog, who sleeps on despite the noise of the anvil and the burning sparks which descend like a shower around him.—*E. Davies.*

416. Alphonse Karr heard a gardener ask his master's permission to sleep for the future in the stable; "for," said he, "there is no possibility of sleeping in the chamber behind the greenhouse, sir; there are nightingales there which do nothing but guggle, and keep up a noise all the night." The sweetest sounds are but an annoyance to those who have no musical ear; doubtless the music of heaven would have no charms to carnal minds; certainly the joyful sound of the gospel is unappreciated so long as men's ears remain uncircumcised.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

417. My daughter plays beautifully on her pianoforte in the next room to my study; it does not divert me from my reading and writing in general, but now and then she touches a chord; down goes my pen, and I do not see a word in my book; all I can do is to listen. Now whilst you are preaching, one has wandered in thought to his farm, another to his merchandise, a third to converse with his friends; *but touch the keynote, set forth in a Saviour's love*—for "the love of Christ constraineth us"—let your own heart be well in tune with it, and theirs will respond.—*Cecil.*

418. A Scotchman asked a minister for five shillings, and in return for the favour said: "I'll give you a day's hearing some time." It is undoubtedly understood by many that in listening to a minister they are conferring a favour upon him. A person once asked me to lend him a sovereign, and in support of his request informed me that he had long attended my ministry.

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Possibly the man richly deserved a sovereign for having done so; at the same time, it is a popular mistake to suppose that the minister is the party receiving the favour. He gives his hearers his best thinking, his best power of all kinds, and it is, therefore, a pity to show him thankfulness by borrowing money of him.—*Dr. Parker.*

419. We crossed and recrossed the river several times by the ferry-boat at Basle. We had no object in the world but merely amusement and curiosity to watch the simple machinery by which the same current is made to drift the boat in opposite directions from side to side. To other passengers it was a business, to us a sport. Our hearers use our ministry in much the same manner when they come to it out of the idlest curiosity, and listen to us as a means of spending a pleasant hour. That which should ferry them across to a better state of soul they use as a mere pleasure-boat, to sail up and down in, *making no progress after years of hearing*. Alas! it may be sport to them, but it is death to us, because we know it will ere long be death to them.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

420. A poor woman in the country went to hear a sermon, in which the use of dishonest weights and measures was exposed. With this discourse she was much affected. The next day, when the minister called upon the woman, he took occasion to ask her what she remembered of his sermon. The poor woman complained much of her bad memory, and said she had forgotten almost all he had delivered. "But one thing," said she, "I remembered—I remembered to burn my bushel."—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

HEAVEN

421. Various figures are employed in the Scriptures to furnish some conception of the kind of eternal home which is being made ready for the righteous.

Heaven is said to be a city, "which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). A building: "In my Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2). A kingdom: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). A

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country: "Now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly" (Heb. 11:16). A garden, the leaves of the trees of which "were for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2). An inheritance: "Incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 1:4).

It is often asserted that heaven is simply a condition: that where righteousness prevails, that is heaven. The figures employed to portray heaven and our Lord's teaching show the incorrectness of that theory. "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3).

But the realisation of heaven will exceed our highest expectations. It is noticeable that John, in Revelation, depicts the wealth of heaven, but says nothing concerning the riches of its inhabitants. Possibly no tongue can tell of them, no pen can write of them, nor hath entered the heart of man an adequate conception of the greatness of the riches of the inheritance of the saints in glory.

In heaven, two of our highest aspirations will be attained. We shall see the King in His beauty, and "shall be like him." "And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:2, 3).

422. Heaven is a city never built with hands, nor hoary with the years of time; a city whose inhabitants no census has numbered; a city through whose streets rush no tide of business, nor nodding hearse creeps slowly with its burden to the tomb: a city without griefs or graves, without sins or sorrows: without births or burials, without marriages or mournings: a city which glories in having Jesus for its King, angels for its guards, saints for citizens; whose walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise.—*Dr. Guthrie*.

423. Swinging to a strap in an uncomfortably crowded street-car going home last evening, the thought came to us continually that, at any rate, we were going home. True, the way of going had its discomforts, but, in spite of this, it was better to be going home than to be going in the opposite direction, in which there was plenty of room in the vacant cars. The Christian may

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say: "I am going home." So, if he be wise, he decides that it is better to endure the pangs of poverty, and even persecution, in behalf of the right, since that course leads homeward, where await him a welcome, rest and peace.—*J. H. Garrison.*

424. Speaking of Lincoln Cathedral, quaint old Thomas Fuller remarks: "The south side meets the travellers thereunto twenty miles off, so that their eyes are there many hours before their feet." Do not we often sing:

"My Father's house on high, Home of my soul how near,
At times to faith's foreseeing eye, thy golden gates appear"?

—*A. E. Illingworth.*

425. "I hope your master has gone to heaven," said some one to a Southern slave in the old-time days of slavery. "I'se afraid he has not gone dar," replied Ben, "for I nebber heard him speak of dat. When he go to de North, or to de springs, he allus be getting ready for weeks ahead ob time, but I never see him getting ready for goin' to heaben." That simple negro's words have a great weight of wisdom and solemn warning to us.—*H. F. Sayles.*

426. A preacher, when rising to leave a car in which he was travelling, was greeted derisively by a young fellow: "Say, preacher, how far is it to heaven?" The reply came quickly: "It is only a step: will you take it?" The young man was silenced, but the reply in after life bore fruit in his conversion.

427. "Dr. Dugan Clarke told me," says J. W. Chapman, "of a little boy in one of the families he knew who was blind, and the father of the boy said, 'Dr. Clarke, there is a celebrated specialist in Indianapolis to whom we want to take our boy; we want you to go with us, and, if successful, we want you to rejoice with us.' They went, and the specialist did his delicate work, and said, 'He is going to see.' When the little fellow opened his eyes and looked upon his mother, he didn't know her; he only knew by the touch of his fingers. Finally the mother could stand it no longer, and she spoke his name. His little arms went around her neck, and all he asked was, 'Mother, is it heaven?' Well, heaven shall be like that."

428. We had traversed the great Aletsch Glacier, and were very hungry when we reached the mountain turn half-way between the Bel Alp and the hotel at the foot of the Aeggischorn; there a peasant undertook to descend the mountain, and bring us bread and milk. It was a very Marah to us when he brought us back milk too sour for us to drink, and bread black as a coal, too hard to bite, and sour as the curds. What then? Why, we longed the more eagerly to reach the hotel towards which we were travelling. We mounted our horses and made no more halts till we reached the hospitable table where our hunger was abundantly satisfied. Thus our disappointments on the road to heaven whet our appetites for the better country, and quicken the pace of our pilgrimage to the celestial city.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

429. Death came unexpectedly to a man of wealth, as it almost always does; and he sent out for his lawyer to draw his will. He went on willing away his property; and when he came to his wife and child, he said he wanted his wife and child to have the home. The little child didn't understand what death was. She was standing near, and she said: "*Papa, have you got a home in that land you are going to?*" The arrow reached that heart; but it was too late. He saw his mistake. He had got no home beyond the grave.

430. The novelist wrote as follows: "The old post-chaise gets more shattered at every turn of the wheel. Windows will not pull up; doors refuse to open and shut. Sickesses come thicker and faster; friends become fewer and fewer. Death has closed the long, dark avenue upon earthly loves and friendships. I look at them as through the grated door of a burial-place filled with monuments of those once dear to me. I shall never see the threescore and ten, and shall be summed up at a discount." Ah! that is not a cheerful sunset of a splendid literary career. At evening-time it looks gloomy and the air smells of the sepulchre. Listen now to the old Christian philanthropist, whose inner life was hid with Christ in God. He writes: "I can scarce understand why my life is spared so long, except it be to show that a man can be just as happy without a fortune as with one. Sailors on a voyage drink to 'friends astern' till they are half-way across, and after that it is 'friends ahead.'"

With me it has been 'friends ahead' for many a year." The veteran pilgrim was getting nearer home. The sun of righteousness flooded his western sky. At evening-time it was light.—*Dr. Cuyler.*

HOPE

431. It is well that hope is denied to none, for dull indeed would the world be without it. Hope is animating—an incentive to effort. God bestows this precious gift liberally to His servants. Paul declares that "by hope were we saved" (Rom. 8:24), and writes of the duty of "patience of hope" (1 Thess. 1:3), "rejoicing in hope" (Heb. 3:6) and "abounding in hope" (Rom. 15:13).

It is needful to test the reality of our hope. There is a "scene in 'Don Quixote' in which the immortal knight put upon himself a helmet made of pasteboard. That helmet being smitten and pierced by a sword, he sewed it up again, and would not part with it, but in his insanity wore it, and felt that he had an all-sufficient helmet on his head. Are there not many Don Quixotes among men, who put on armour that looks very well till some sword or spear is thrust into it, but which then is found to be like the pasteboard helmet that went to pieces the moment it was touched?" Hope is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast," and the question is:

"Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift, or firm remain?"

The supreme hope of the Christian is that of seeing Christ, and being like Him. The church hopes for the Bridegroom's coming. Many shattered hopes are but a part of life's experience, but in this we shall not be disappointed. "And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3).

432. Hope differs from faith, in that it looks only forward to future objects. It looks not back, nor does it contemplate the present: "for," says Paul, "what a man sees, why does he yet hope for?" nor looks it on all the future; but only on future *good*. It desires and expects good, and nothing else. There is

not one dark cloud, not one dark speck, in all the heavens of Christian hope. Everything seen in its wide dominions, in the unbounded prospect yet before us, is bright, cheering, animating, transporting. It is all desirable and desired. It is all expected. It is all "earnest expectation"; not a doubtful, but a "confident, expectation of things" desirable and to be "hoped for."—*Alexander Campbell.*

433. There are some matches which can only be kindled on one kind of surface. We may rub them on an unsuitable surface through a very long day, and no spark will be evoked. The fine, effective flame of hope can only be kindled upon one surface. The human must come into contact with the divine. Where else can the holy fire be kindled? A mother is in despair about her son. His face is set in the ways of vice, and his imagination is being led captive by the devil. How shall I quicken the mother's hope, the hope which is so fruitful in loving devices? I will tell her that it is a long lane that has never a turning. I will tell her that the fiercest fire burns itself out at last. But these worldly proverbs awaken no fervent response. The depression remains heavy and cold. The match does not strike. I must lead her to "the God of hope." A brother is discouraged because of his moral and spiritual bondage. How shall I kindle his hope? I will point out to him the lofty ideal, and let the dazzling splendour of the supreme heights break upon his gaze. But the ideal only emphasises and confirms his pessimism. I will then turn his eyes upon inferior men, and point out to him men who are more demoralised than himself. But the vision of the inferior is only creative of self-conceit. A fine, efficient hope is not yet born. The match does not strike. I must lead him to "the God of hope." It is in God that assurance is born, and a fruitful optimism sustained. We must get our fire at the divine altar.—*J. H. Jowett.*

434. Upon a sun-dial standing upon the pier in Brighton, England, can be seen these hopeful words: "'Tis always morn-ing somewhere in the world."

435. There is a Swedish proverb which reads: "Hope carries a king's crown." If a sculptor were called upon to make an

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image of hope, he would make it a high, light form with beaming eyes and a crown upon its head, as a sign of power, which hope exercises over the race of man. Where there is hope, there the miseries of life can be overcome or carried: when hope is gone, then life has lost its attractions. Therefore we are told, in the deeply significant Greek fable, that when all the misfortunes were scattered abroad among men, as a punishment of the gods, men were permitted to retain hope. If this, too, had been taken, then nothing would have been left except despair.—*James Paulli.*

436. Many a time in "dark" hours—for sometimes there are dark hours—the memory of this which some one else has written has come to me, singing its song of a cheerful hope: "Here is Cyrus Field conceiving the idea of binding the Atlantic with a cord, of making that awful crystal dome a whispering gallery between two worlds. In carrying out this idea the man has two servants to help him, the Faith that it can be done, and the Hope that he shall do it. With these ideas he goes to work. Faith steadies him; Hope inspires him. Faith works; Hope flies. Faith deliberates; Hope anticipates. Faith lets the cable go, and it breaks and is lost; 'Nay, not lost,' cries Hope, and fishes it up again. Faith threw the cord; Hope caught it."—*W. Hoyt.*

437. If we set our hopes on God, we can face very quietly the darkness that lies ahead of us. Earthly hopes are only the mirrors in which the past reflects itself, as in some great palace you will find a lighted chamber, with a great sheet of glass at each end, which perpetuates in shining rows the lights behind the spectator. A curtain veils the future, and earthly hope can only put a looking-glass in front of it that reflects what has been. But the hope that is set on God draws back the curtain, and lets us see enough of a fixed, eternal future to make our lives bright and our hearts calm. The darkness remains; what of that if "I know I shall not drift beyond His love and care"? Set your hopes on God, and they will not be ashamed.—*A. Mac-laren.*

438. At one time I was sorely vexed and tried by my own sinfulness, by the wickedness of the world, and by the dangers that beset the church. One morning I saw my wife dressed in

mourning. Surprised, I asked her who had died. "Do you not know?" she replied; "God in heaven is dead." "How can you talk such nonsense, Katie?" I said; "how can God die? Why, he is immortal, and will live through all eternity." "Is that really true?" she asked. "Of course," I said, still not perceiving what she was aiming at; "how can you doubt it? As surely as there is a God in heaven, so sure is it that He can never die." "And yet," she said, "though you do not doubt that, yet you are so hopeless and discouraged." Then I observed what a wise woman my wife was, and mastered my sadness.—*Luther's "Table Talk."*

439. Tennyson sings of "the mighty hopes which make us men." Have you ever thought of the worst loss which can come to a man? Loss of property? That is a sad loss, but not the worst. Loss of friends? That is a sad loss, but not the worst. Loss of opportunity? Nor is that the worst of losses. Loss of hope, when the heart dies, and the courage fails, and the hands hang listlessly, and a man begins only to drudge—this, the loss of hope, is the blackest loss.

"I've just got back from Washington, where I've been since the election, trying to get an appointment," said a politician. "Gave up hope, eh?" said a sympathising friend. "Oh, no," was the quick reply. "I came home to hope. It's cheaper to hope here." I like that: hope anyway. Get, if you must, the cheapest place to hope, but hope.—*W. Hoyt.*

440. "Alexander, hearing of the riches of the Indies, and intending to win them for himself, divided his kingdom of Macedon among his captains and soldiers. When asked what he had left for himself, he answered, 'Hope.' The Christian, who is to own the wealth of heaven, may regard as of little value the riches of earth."

441. "'Look up!' thundered the captain of a vessel, as his boy grew giddy while gazing from the topmast. 'Look up!' The boy looked up, and returned in safety. Young man, look up, and you will succeed. Never look down and despair. Leave dangers uncared for, and push on. If you falter, you lose. Do right, and trust in God."

442.

Be Thou the rainbow to the storms of life,
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray.

—Byron.

HUMILITY

443. Humility is a flower of a plant set by the divine hand. The heathen world knew nothing of this virtue. God delights in humility. He is "nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps. 34:18). It has been said that pride and self-sufficiency are a miserable insufficiency, but meekness and self-distrust are allied to all-sufficiency.

Our divine Master frequently taught and exemplified this virtue. He said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). He frequently commended humility, and said: "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:14). "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3). He took a towel, girded Himself, poured water into a basin, and washed the disciples' feet (John 13:4, 5). Peter wrote: "All of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another; for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. 5:5, 6).

It is to be feared that, ofttime, humility is sadly lacking, and, instead, there is much contention for place, desire for pre-eminence. Many would far rather stand receiving the plaudits of their followers, than, like their Master, bend at their feet as a slave.

To cultivate this virtue, men need to fix their thoughts upon the Lord. Not that there is much virtue in the recognition of our littleness. "It is no great humility in a fly to esteem itself nothing in comparison to a mountain; nor for a drop of water to hold itself nothing in comparison of the sea; nor for a spark of fire to hold itself nothing in respect of the sun." Yet, it is well to place ourselves alongside of Omnipotence, for thoughts of God's greatness lead to a deep consciousness of our nothingness.

444. People pray that they may be humble. Here is a big, strong man who, in the morning, prays that he may be humble through the day; and in order to make it more effectual, while kneeling he puts his head clear down in his chair; and in order to make it still more effectual, he talks in an official voice. When his prayer is finished, he gets up and straightens himself, and goes to his store, and storms about his business. He is not going to see things go to rack and ruin because nobody feels responsible. And the man quite forgets his prayer. When he comes home at night he has some mournful feelings about the way in which he has conducted himself through the day. And the next morning he prays for humility again. The experience of the previous day is repeated. At night his feelings are mel-
lowed down once more (for men almost always have the grace of humility when they are sleepy); and so he gets through another night.

Now, the fault did not lie in the fact that the man prayed God to make him humble. The fault lay in this, that he thought the prayer relieved him from the responsibility of training himself—from the necessity of the yoke and the harness. Men pray for meekness, and yet when they are brought into circumstances which call for the exercise of meekness, they forget their prayer.
—*H. W. Beecher.*

445. "Humble we must be, if to heaven we go;
High is the roof there, but the door is low."

446. Among the truly popular girls I have known, one stands out pre-eminently. I never knew one person who did not find her just lovable. Once during her Sophomore year in high school a group of her chums were discussing mottoes and naming their favorites. "Hitch your waggon to a star" and "To the stars through difficulties" were favoured. Turning to Jessie, some one said, "Haven't you a motto?" "Yes," she said; "it is this: 'Me last!'" "What do you mean by that?" the others asked. "That's my motto, and I think it is a good one." "But what does it mean?" Then Jessie explained: "It means just what it says—'me last.' That is, I am to think of myself last; I am to put every one else ahead of me, and then can look after myself when everybody else is taken care of. See?" The girls saw,

and they knew that right there lay the secret of her popularity.—*A. W. Cooper.*

447. One has written: I once heard Dr. Parker deliver his famous lecture on "Clocks and Watches." It made such an impression upon my mind that I could almost repeat it word for word, illustration for illustration. This was one among the rest: "A little watch so delicately strung, dissatisfied with its little sphere in a lady's pocket, envied 'Big Ben,' as one day it passed, with her ladyship, over Westminster Bridge. 'I wish I could be up there,' said the little watch so delicately strung; 'I could then serve the multitude.' 'You shall have the opportunity, little watch,' said the Doctor; 'come down, Big Ben, and go into the lady's pocket.'" He dramatically described the little watch being drawn up the tower by a silk thread. "Where are you, little watch? I cannot see you," he finally explained; then, pausing, in his dramatic style, he said: "Its elevation has become its annihilation."

448. I used to think God's gifts were on shelves one above the other, and that the taller we grow in Christian character the more easily we should reach them. I find now that God's gifts are on shelves one beneath the other, and that it is not a question of growing taller, but of stooping lower, and that we have to go down, always down, to get His best gifts.—*Emma C. Fisk.*

449. Earthly thrones are generally built with steps up to them; the remarkable thing about the thrones of the eternal Kingdom is that the steps are all down to them. We must descend if we would reign, stoop if we would rise.—*F. B. Meyer.*

450. When the Danish missionaries in India appointed some of their Indian converts to translate a portion of the Scriptures, in which the privilege of Christians to become sons of God was mentioned, one of the translators, startled at so bold a saying, as he thought it, said: "It is too much; let me rather render it, 'They shall be permitted to kiss His feet.'"—*Whitecross.*

451. Our humiliations work out our most elevated joys. The way that a drop of rain comes to sing in the leaf that rustles

in the top of the tree all the summer long, *is by going down to the roots first* and from thence ascending to the bough.—*H. W. Beecher.*

452. "A farmer went with his son into a wheatfield to see if it was ready for the harvest. 'See, father,' exclaimed the boy, 'how straight these stems hold up their heads! They must be the best ones. Those that hang their heads down, I am sure, cannot be good for much.' The farmer plucked a stalk of each kind, and said: 'See here, foolish child! This stalk that stood so straight is light-headed, and almost good for nothing, while this that hung its head so modestly is full of the most beautiful grain.'"

453. "The *London Times* awhile ago told the story of a petition that was being circulated for signatures. It was a time of great excitement, and this petition was intended to have great influence in the House of Lords; but there was one word left out. Instead of reading, 'We humbly beseech thee,' it read, 'We beseech thee.' So it was ruled out. My friends, if we want to make an appeal to the God of heaven, we must humble ourselves; and if we do humble ourselves before the Lord, we shall not be disappointed."

INFIDELITY

454. Much infidelity is caused through men's hatred of Christian principles and those who endeavour to practise them. Many know the truth and right, but deliberately choose error and evil. They are infidels because an attitude of unbelief best accords with their manner of living. "This is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men love the darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil" (John 3:19). Such "hold down the truth of God in unrighteousness," and have "exchanged the truth of God for a lie," and "refused to have God in their knowledge" (Rom. 1:18, 25, 28). The root of their scepticism is sin.

Pascal has said: "There is in Christianity light enough for those who sincerely wish to see, and darkness enough to confound those of an opposite direction." It may safely be said,

as a rule, that to those who sincerely wish to see, the light will shine, and into the minds of upright seekers the truth will come.

Yet one cannot fail to note that there are a few exceptions. Infidels of another class are to be met with. They are honest and earnest, ever searching for religious truth, and yet they do not find it. What should be our attitude towards such as these? In the first place, we should respect them. An honest doubter is to be preferred to an unthinking sponge that takes in everything. Wholesale denunciation is as useless as it is unchristianly. You cannot bully doubters into believers. Neither will it help to pass such by in silent contempt. Far more creditable is it to make an effort to reasonably reply to them.

There may be some way in which you can help them. Probably, their study has been superficial. They may have overlooked the most convincing proofs, or fallen into the common error of judging Christianity by the lives of the worst kind of professors, or the word of God by the traditions of men. False professors are responsible for much infidelity. The reply to such scepticism is the true Christian life and the intellectual reason for our hope.

We should remember that open infidels are not the most dangerous. "There is a set of men who persuade themselves that they believe Christianity, whilst in truth they are reasoning Christianity out of doors." The influence of such must be worse than that of honest doubters.

455. It would be difficult to conceive a more complete eclipse than the English deists have undergone. Woolston and Tindal, Collins and Chubb, have long since passed into the land of shadows, and their works have mouldered in the obscurity of forgetfulness. Bolingbroke is now little more than a brilliant name, and all the beauties of his matchless style have been unable to preserve his philosophy from oblivion. Shaftesbury retains a certain place as one of the few disciples of idealism who resisted the influence of Locke; but his importance is purely historical. . . . The shadow of the tomb rests upon them all; a deep, unbroken silence, the chill of death, surrounds them. They have long since ceased to wake any interest, or to suggest any enquiries, or to impart any impulse to the intellect of England.—*Lecky*.

456. The celebrated French author and poet who might well be called the "Nietzsche" of France, a man whose pen has up to now been used in mockery and bitter sarcasm of all religious belief, now himself exhorts his people in a public confession to return to the alone-saving foundation of the Christian faith. It is as follows: "I once laughed at faith and thought myself wise. But as I saw France bleeding and weeping, my laughter could not give me joy. I stood by the way and saw the soldiers as they went light-heartedly to face death. I asked, 'What is it that makes you so?' I counted the sacrifices of our people and saw how they accepted them with praying hearts. Then it was to me a great comfort to know of an eternal fatherland. A nation must despair if it does not believe that the sufferings of earth will become the joy of heaven. Who can hope, when everything is failing, save he who has faith in God? How fearful and burning are the wounds of a people in whom no drop of blood from the holy One flows! Oh! I dare not name Him (Jesus Christ). He was so good, and I—. . . What would become of France if her children did not believe or her women did not pray? A vast people of the dead cover the field! How hard it is to be an atheist upon this national burying-ground! I can't do it, I can't be one! I have deceived myself, and you who have read my books and sung my songs. I was mad. It has all been an awful dream! Oh! France, France! return to your faith and to your best days. To depart from God is to be lost. I know not whether I shall be alive to-morrow, but I must tell my friends Lavedan does not dare to die an atheist. It is not hell that makes me afraid, but this one thought grips me: God lives, and thou art so far from him! Oh! my soul, rejoice that thou art permitted to see the hour in which, kneeling, I have learnt to say, 'I believe, I believe in God, I believe.'"

457. H. W. Beecher, after hearing one of Ingersoll's lectures, told the story of a boy on crutches who tried to wend his way through a crowded street: He was crossing the road, and a man deliberately put his leg around the poor lad's crutch, and threw him down, to be trampled to death by the horses. That's what infidelity does; it takes away the crutch.—*C. R. Scoville.*

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458. The man who says there is a God, but He is for me and not for you, is a worse infidel than the man who says that there is no God.—*Fairbairn*.

459. Basendale tells of a lady who had been a prominent lecturer among the infidel classes, who came to her death-bed. Being much disturbed in mind, her friends gathered about her and exhorted her to "hold on to the last." "Yes, I have no objection to holding on," said the dying woman, "but will you tell me what I am to hold on by?"

460. "A thoughtful scholar said that for years he had read every book he could find that assailed the religion of Jesus Christ, and should have become an infidel *but for three things*. 'First: I am a man. I am going somewhere. To-night I am nearer the grave than I was last night. I have read all such books can tell me. They shed not one ray of hope upon the darkness. They shall not take away the only guide and leave me stone-blind. Second: I had a mother. I saw her go down into the dark valley where I am going, and she leaned upon an unseen arm as calmly as a child goes to sleep on the breast of its mother. I know that was not a dream. Third: I have three motherless daughters. They have no protector but myself. I would rather kill them than leave them in this sinful world if you will blot out from it all the teachings of the gospel.'"

461. "To a young infidel who was scoffing at Christianity because of the misconduct of its professors, the late Dr. Mason said: 'Did you ever know an uproar to be made because an infidel went astray from the paths of morality?' The infidel admitted that he had not. 'Then, don't you see,' said Dr. M., 'that, by *expecting the professors of Christianity to be holy*, you admit it to be a holy religion, and thus pay it the highest compliment in your power?' The young man was silent."

462. "A minister had delivered a course of addresses on infidelity, and as time went on he was delighted to find that an infidel was anxious to unite himself with the congregation. 'Which of my arguments did you find the most convincing?' asked the minister. 'No argument moved me,' was the reply,

'but the face and manner of an old, blind woman who sits in one of the front rows. I supported her one day as she was groping along, and, putting out her hand to me, she asked, "*Do you love my blessed Saviour?*" Her look of deep content, her triumphant tones, made me realise as never before that He who could suffice to make one so helpless bright and glad must be a "blessed Saviour" indeed.'

463. "In 1802, Paine thus replied to an infidel admirer: 'I am sorry that that work, "*The Age of Reason*," ever went to press. I wrote it more for my own amusement, and to see what I could do, than with any design of benefiting the world. I would give worlds, had I them at my command, had "*The Age of Reason*" never been published.'

464. "The infidel who, by his cavils, would undermine the foundations of Christian hope, is like the madman who recklessly pushes from him the lifeboat which is his only hope of rescue from the wreck. Christianity does hold out hope; it is a hope which has proved substantial and consolatory to thousands; but what has infidelity done? Its highest achievement is to produce temporary insensibility to a fate which cannot be averted, and which, when it does come, will crush the obdurate unbeliever into perdition."

465. "A London minister met an infidel who 'wished all the churches were swept from the land, beginning with Spurgeon's.' 'Then, which of you infidels will be the first to take upon himself the responsibility of Mr. Spurgeon's orphanage?' was the minister's reply. The silence following the question was very expressive."

INFLUENCE

466. It is impossible to rid one's self of the power of influence. "For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself" (Rom. 14:7). The most insignificant and the most isolated are of influence, affecting others in one way or another. Influence is ineradicable. None can dispossess themselves of this power. All that can be done is to direct it, for good or evil.

One of the old writers thus illustrates it: "A vessel sailing

from Joppa carried a passenger who, beneath his berth, cut a hole through the ship's side. When the men of the watch expostulated with him, 'What doest thou, O miserable man?' the offender calmly replied, 'What matters it to you? The hole I have made lies under my own berth.'" "This ancient parable," says C. H. Spurgeon, "is worthy of the utmost consideration. No man perishes alone in his iniquity; no man can guess the full consequences of his transgression." In the same way, it can be said that the consequences of good deeds cannot be measured.

In seeking to influence others for good, care must be taken lest attention be drawn to one's self, and the effort made to perpetuate one's own name or views, rather than to lead men to a knowledge of and obedience to the truth. Christians should be willing, like John the Baptist, to decrease, even to nothingness, that Christ may increase.

467. Oh, it is a terrible power that I have—this power of influence! And it clings to me: I cannot shake it off. It was born with me: it has grown with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. It speaks, it walks, it moves; it is powerful in every look of my eye, in every word of my lips, in every act of my life. I cannot live to myself. I must either be a light to illumine, or a tempest to destroy. I must either be an Abel, who, by his immortal righteousness, "being dead, yet speaketh;" or an Achan, the saddest continuance of whose otherwise forgotten name is the fact that man perishes not alone in his iniquity.—*Punshon*.

468. "Not what has happened to myself to-day, but what has happened to others through me—that should be my thought."

469. George Eliot wrote: "What do you live for, except to make life less difficult for each other? If ever we are inclined to throw up the sponge, it will be well to remember the following story: 'Where are you taking me?' exclaimed the little taper to the lighthouse-keeper. 'To make a great light,' he replied. 'But I am too small.' 'Leave that to me,' he answered. Presently a magnificent light shone out over the sea twenty miles. It was started by the little taper."

470. Prof. Henry Drummond told of a young man who lay upon his death-bed. He was a Christian, but for many days before his death a black cloud had gathered on his brow. Just before his final breath, he beckoned to the friends around his bed. "Take my influence," he said, "and bury it with me." But that could not be done. He passed to his rest, but his influence remained.

471. Lord Peterborough, speaking on one occasion of the celebrated Fenelon, observed: "He is a delicious creature; I was forced to get away from him as fast as I possibly could, else he would have made me pious." Would to God that all of us had such an influence over godless men.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

472. "In a cemetery a little white stone marked the grave of a dear little girl, and on the stone were chiselled these words: 'A child of whom her playmate said, "It was easier to be good when she was with us"'—one of the most beautiful epitaphs ever heard of."

473. It is a great comfort just to look at a man who is good-natured. I remember once riding from Franklin, in Indiana, on a cold night. I was chilled. I was so cold that I almost feared that I should freeze. After awhile I came across a blacksmith's shop. I saw a bright-shining light on the forge. Logs were burning and smouldering there, and sending up their red flame. I was so cold that, to tell you the truth, I cried. I wanted to get off and warm myself, but I was afraid that I should be so numb that I could not get on again. So I sat and looked at the fire a moment, and then I said, "Well, I feel better just for looking at you," and rode on.—*H. W. Beecher.*

474. Whenever I think of *winning* souls to Christ, I recall the history of a beloved friend who, thirty years ago, was a wretched waif on the current of "fast living" (which really means fast dying). The reckless youth seemed abandoned of God and man. He spent his nights in the buffooneries of the dramshop, and his days in the waking remorse of the drunkard. On a certain Sunday afternoon he was sauntering through the public square of Worcester, out of humour with all the world

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and with himself. A kind voice suddenly saluted him. It was from a stranger, who touched him on the shoulder and said, very cordially: "Mr. Gough, I believe?" "Yes, sir, that's my name." Then followed a few kind words from the benevolent stranger, with a pressing invitation to "come to our meeting to-morrow night, where I will introduce you to good friends, who will *help* you keep a temperance pledge." The promise was made on the spot, and faithfully kept. The pledge was taken, and by God's help is kept to this hour. The poor bootmaker who tapped that youth on the shoulder has gone to heaven. But the man he saved has touched more hearts to tears than any other living man on the globe. Methinks, when I listen to the thunders of applause which greet John B. Gough in vast, crowded lecture-halls, I am only hearing the echoes of that tap on the shoulder under the elms of Worcester. "He that *winneth* souls is wise."—*Cuyler*.

475. I knew a miller who went from his work, his clothes covered with flour, to the post-office, and edged his way through the crowd. He left his mark on every one he touched. As Christians we should leave a mark for Christ on every one with whom we come in contact.—*H. B. Gibbud*.

476. "By far the hardest place to glorify God is in the home, but here is where the truest test of a Christian is found. An enthusiastic Christian worker once asked a little girl if she was a Christian. The child hesitated a moment, and said: 'Will you please ask my mother if I am?' The mother testified to the sweet, loving, dutiful life of the child in their home."

477. The form of a little boy lay in the coffin, surrounded by mourning friends. A mason came into the room and asked to look at the lovely face. "You wonder that I care so much," he said, as the tears rolled down his cheeks, "but your boy was a messenger of God to me. One time I was coming down by a long ladder from a very high roof, and found your boy close beside me when I reached the ground. He looked up in my face with childish wonder and asked frankly, 'Weren't you afraid of falling when you were up so high?' and before I had time to answer, he said: 'Oh, I know why you were not afraid!'

You said your prayers this morning before you began work.' I had not prayed; but I never forgot to pray from that day to this, and, by God's blessing, I never will."—*Sermon Illustrator*.

INSPIRATION

478. Inspiration, as we find it in the Scriptures, is the influence of God's Holy Spirit in the minds of men by which they were able to reveal the mysteries of God to their fellow-men. "Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). Thus influenced, they were able to reveal the will of God without foreknowledge or premeditation (Matt. 10:19, 20). Inspiration included the thought and the word or words that were best suited to express it. The apostle Paul says: "We received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual words" (1 Cor. 2:12, 13). It is evident from this that the very words were inspired. They were God's words, hence the whole is "the word of God." This accounts for its marvelous power. It gives new life to those who receive it. "Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth" (1 Pet. 1:23). It also sanctifies the believer in Christ. "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Inspiration, thus viewed, does not necessarily deprive the inspired man of free agency or reduce him to a mere machine. We may not limit the power of the Spirit. He could inspire without interfering with the subject's idiosyncrasies, and without his feeling himself fettered or hampered. The fact that different words are used to tell the same thing, as in the synoptic Gospels, is no argument against the verbal theory of inspiration. The Holy Spirit is not restricted to one set of words. It is the only absolutely safe view to take of Holy Scripture; for unless the very words, as originally spoken or written, were inspired, what assurance can we have that the thoughts of the Holy Spirit have been correctly conveyed to us? David said: "The opening of thy words giveth light" (Ps. 119:130). That is, the thought opens out, like a rosebud, through the words, giving light to the soul of man.

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479. Let this, then, be our *attitude*, to tell it out to the wide world that the blessed Bible, the "holy scriptures" of both Testaments, are the product of the "breath of God," who made heaven and earth, and "breathed" into man His soul; the product of that divine "breath" that regenerates, that illumines and sanctifies the soul; a "*God-breathed*" Scripture, whose "words" are the "words of God." Tell it to the church in her seminaries, universities, and colleges, from her pulpits, Sunday schools, and Bible classes, and sound it in every convention, conference, and assembly that her conception and estimate of the Scriptures must be no lower and no less than were the high conception and estimate of the "volume of the Book" by our Lord and His apostles; that what they regarded as the "breath of God," she must so regard in opposition to every breath of man that dares to breathe otherwise. . . . Say to the rising ministry: "Speak as the oracles of God speak"—the words that "God hath spoken," the words that Christ has written. . . . Tell it to every reader and hearer of the Word, that what "Moses saith" and "David saith" and "Isaiah, Peter, Paul, John, and the Scripture saith," is what "*God saith*." Tell it to the dying saint, when his last pulse quivers at the wrist, and friends are weeping by his bed, and "science" has exhausted in vain all her poor resources, that God, who breathed the Scriptures, "cannot lie," that Jesus is a Rock, and that the "firm foundation" laid in the Word for his faith can never disappoint his trust. To every question of exegesis or of criticism, return the answer: "What saith the scriptures?" "How readest thou?" "It is written!" And cease to deride the most sacred, age-established, and time-honoured tradition the apostolic church has left us. With such an *attitude* as this, the days will revisit the church, as once they were "in the beginning," and God, honoured in His word, will no longer restrain the Spirit, but open the windows of heaven, and pour upon her a blessing so great that there will not be room to receive it. God hasten the day!—*L. W. Munhall*.

480. The word of God is a chart that marks all the rocks and reefs in the sea of life; if we heed, and sail our frail bark by it, we shall come safely into the haven of rest at last. But if we are heedless and proud, and self-sufficient in our own con-

ceits, we shall make shipwreck of our faith. A young lieutenant in the English navy discovered a small but dangerous rock in the Mediterranean, never before known, and reported it to the admiralty. It was telegraphed to all the stations and ordered to be put down on all the charts. The first ship to sail over the spot was under command of an old captain, who, noting the warning newly placed on his chart, desired to know by whom the rock was reported. On being informed, he replied: "There is no such rock there. I have sailed over this sea for twenty years, and if such a rock had been there I would have found it." And then, in his pride and conceit, he gave orders to his sailing-master to steer directly over the spot indicated. The gallant ship was driven over the danger spot under full sail. There was a tremendous crash, and the noble vessel went down with all hands. Many a Christian suffers shipwreck through unheeding conceit or neglect of his infallible chart.—*G. F. Pentecost.*

481. Commentaries are good, but not good as substitutes for independent search. When Alexander the Great stood before Diogenes as he sat by his tub, the general asked the philosopher what he could do for him. The rather grim reply was: "Simply stand out of my light." And any searcher has a right to say "Get out of my light" to every one whose shadow comes between him and the truth.—*A. C. Dixon.*

482. If the Bible were like a collection of stones, we might select some and put aside others, as less valuable and beautiful; and although in such selection we might make great mistakes, we should still be in possession of something more or less complete. But the Bible is like a plant, and all its parts are not mechanically or accidentally connected, but organically united, and hence a law of life rules here; and he who reveres life will neither add nor take away from the beautiful plant which the Father hath planted in and through Christ by the Spirit. . . . Nobody asserts that a man would be killed if you cut off his hair and his nails. But there is a vital union of all his members. If you cut off my little finger, I shall survive it, but it is *my* little finger you cut off, and it is a loss, a disfigurement. So with the Bible. It is not like a piece of cloth

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that you can clip and cut. It is a body, animated by one Spirit.
—*A. Saphir.*

483. "In the famous Tribuna of the Uffizi gallery of art at Florence, a tourist armed with his guide-book went up to the curator. 'Are these your masterpieces?' he asked; 'I certainly don't see much in them myself.' 'Sir,' said the curator, 'these pictures are not on their trial; it is the visitors who are on their trial.' So, the Bible is not on its trial, but we are."

484. "King Edward VI., when three swords were delivered at his coronation unto him as king of England, France, and Ireland, said that there was yet one sword to be delivered unto him. Whereat, when the lords marvelled, he said: 'I mean the sacred Bible, which is the sword of the Spirit, without which we are nothing, neither can do anything.'"

485. Harold Begbie, in "The Ordinary Man and the Extraordinary Thing," describes an interview he had with a splendidly built young man of the Y. M. C. A. He said he was on the way to preside at a meeting. His work was in a large London warehouse. The majority of his fellow-clerks were moral men, but indifferent to religion. "They don't think about it; they leave it alone," he said, through his closed teeth, bitterly. Begbie enquired if he was chaffed by these men. "Not more than I can endure; they know when to stop," he said grimly. "You go in for athletics?" "I scull every Saturday afternoon on the Thames." "You don't find it hard to bear the chaffing, etc.?" "There's good in all of them, even the worst. I try to get at that. Three or four of us hold prayer-meetings and classes for the study of the Bible. We try to persuade the others to join us." "And you don't despair?" "No, I don't despair." And then the colour in his cheeks seemed to deepen; he looked at Begbie with an added defiance, and through his closed teeth said, with an increased challenge in the voice: "I've been wonderfully strengthened of late, feeding on the word of God." He stood before Begbie, with all the strength of restrained movement which one feels in a man anxious to be gone, and added, with a jerk of his head: "Yes, I've been feeding on the word of God!"

INTEMPERANCE

486. In a general sense, intemperance is excess of any kind. The following illustrations have special reference to indulgence in alcoholic liquors. It is scarcely necessary in our day to dwell at length upon the Scripture teaching upon this most important question. In unequivocal language the Bible denounces intemperance.

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Prov. 20:1). “Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder” (Prov. 23:31, 32). “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares” (Luke 21:34). “Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:10). Who, in the light of such scathing denunciation, can view intemperance and its evil results unmoved? One wonders what kind of anathemas would have been hurled had Biblical writers lived in our day, and witnessed the foul saloons and fiery liquids of the twentieth century!

Here, then, we are face to face with an arch-enemy of mankind, which insidiously works ruin, defiling the temple of God, and proving itself daily antagonistic to religion, civilisation, and prosperity. It follows that the attitude of Christians towards the drink traffic should be one of uncompromising hostility. Towards those engaged in the business, or victims of alcohol, our attitude should be one of brotherliness, but towards the drinking habit we should assume an attitude of eternal and uncompromising antagonism. The bounden duty of Christendom is to present a united front to the world on this question, with earnest prayers accompanying consecrated effort that the giant foe of humanity and civilisation might be speedily felled and annihilated.

487. Intemperance is a hydra with a hundred heads. She never stalks abroad unaccompanied with impurity, anger, and the most infamous profligacies.—*Chrysostom*.

488.

"It was not on the field of battle, it was not with a ship at sea,
But a fate far worse than either, that stole him away from me;
'Twas the death in the ruby wine-cup, that the reason and senses drown;
He drank the alluring poison, and thus my boy went down.

"Down from the heights of manhood, to the depths of disgrace and sin;
Down to a worthless being, from the hope of what might have been.
For the brand of a beast besotted, he bartered his manhood's 'crown,'
Through the gate of a sinful pleasure, my poor, weak boy went down."

489. When a lad of eleven, the writer resided in Brighton, England. One afternoon, whilst going to school with a playmate, the latter's father was upon the street in an intoxicated condition, hat and coat off, flinging his money amongst a crowd of laughing, scrambling children. All who saw him were highly amused. But when, upon returning from school, we saw a crowd of people upon the railway bridge, and learned that my playmate's father had just plunged himself in front of the London-Brighton express, which cut his head off; and when, a little later, I saw my playmate fainting over his father's corpse, I made up my mind that, God helping me, I would never again laugh at the drunkard.

490. Not long after the incident just recorded, I had an experience which caused me to pray daily that we might leave Brighton, though, when we did move, it was to London, where such tragedies were even more frequent. I went to a grocer's two streets away on an errand for mother; heard an awful cry of "Murder! Murder!"; rushed out with the other customers just in time to see a crowd dispersing, a man lying across the pavement, just a few doors along the street, with blood-covered head hanging over the curbstone, and a woman just kneeling beside him with sponge and basin in hand, to wash his wounds. The poor fellow died within a few moments, killed as the result of a drunken brawl, whilst his murderer, who made off with the crowd, was hanged a few weeks later.

491. A village toper went to the poll on election morning, as near sober as he could be, his brain as clear as a drunkard's brain could become. The issue was no license. Trembling and blear-eyed, and with bloated face, he walked up to the booth to

cast his vote. He said: "I am going to vote no license." A publican standing near thought this a joke, and, with a wink at his companions, handed the village toper a copy of the ballot paper, saying: "Put your cross in the bottom square." This he did, and cast his vote for no license. It was no joke now. They began to laugh at the poor old sot, who had struck such an effective blow at the thing which had robbed and debauched him. "A pretty no-license voter you are!" one scoffed; "why, if there was a bottle of whisky on the top of that telegraph-pole, which you could have by climbing the pole, at the risk of your life, you know you'd climb." "Yes," said the drunkard, "but," as he drew himself up as best he could, "I know it, oh, yes, I know it; and I know another thing, gentlemen, if the whisky wasn't there, I wouldn't climb." So, if temptation is not in the way of people, they will not be tempted.

492. "Edward Dunbar, author of the hymn, 'There's a Light in the Window for Thee, Brother,' sleeps in a pauper's grave at Coffeyville, Kansas, where he died a tramp in the town gaol. One night he called at the Coffeyville gaol for shelter. He was sick, and the authorities took him in, and the next day he died. Some good people erected a marble slab over his grave, on which these words are inscribed: 'Here lies Edward Dunbar, who wrote "There's a Light in the Window for Thee, Brother."' Thousands have sung that pathetic song. How sad to think that poor Edward Dunbar ended his career in darkness, and saw only the light that came through a prison window as he was about to end his earthly career. Drink was the cause of his fall."

493. I saw a picture, once, entitled "The Beginning and the End," from a drawing by Mr. George Taylor, the well-known Australian artist. On one side was to be seen a small boy lifting a jug of beer to his lips. On the other an old man—the boy grown old in sin—ragged, bruised, drunken, sitting and sleeping at the side of a public house.

494. Henry Ward Beecher was once asked to explain his position on the use of intoxicating liquors by Christians. He replied thus: "It is just like this. Suppose there is a precipice out by a schoolhouse, where many children are assembled. Sup-

pose that halfway down the precipice there is a spring that I especially enjoy, and, strong man that I am, I can go down safely, by a narrow path, dangerous to many, but not to me. Suppose that the children are determined to go down there after me, and will not believe that the path is dangerous since they see me tread it with impunity. Some of them that try it fall and break their necks and others are maimed for life. Now, what sort of a man—much more, what sort of a Christian—should I be if, under these circumstances, I persist in going down that dangerous path? Nay, verily, if I have one particle of magnanimity of soul, if I have been at all of Christ, I shall put a good, strong fence across that path, and never tread it any more. This is my position on the total abstinence question.”

495. Many years ago, on a Lord's Day morning, I took train to Melbourne on my way to an appointment in Brunswick. Upon reaching Jolimont, the train suddenly stopped. Looking out of the carriage window, just beneath, I saw the mangled body of a young man. “The Judgment” was the evening theme, when I made reference to the awful scene I had witnessed in the morning. At the close of the meeting word came that the man who was killed was related to certain attendants, from whom it was learned that he had been the victim of strong drink, had lived a most dissolute life, and had deliberately thrown himself before the train after a Saturday night's carousal.

496. A Chinaman applied for a position as cook. The lady of the house and several other members of her family were members of a fashionable church, and the Chinaman was questioned closely. “Do you drink whisky?” “No, I Clistian man.” “Do you play cards?” “No, I Clistian man.” He was employed, and gave great satisfaction. After some weeks the lady gave a euchre party and wine was served. John Chinaman was called in to serve the refreshment, which he did without comment. But the next morning he waited on the lady and told her he wanted to quit. “Why, what is the matter?” she inquired. John replied: “I Clistian man. I tell you so. I no heathen. I no work for heathen.”

497. One afternoon, in the course of visitation, a lady told me that for several years she had taken charge of a little boy and girl whose mother had died. Soon after the death of the mother, the children's guardian took them to church. When the service was about half over, the little boy said: "Mamma, I want beer! I want beer!" The lady tried to pacify the child, but he kept saying, "I want beer," until she threatened him with a whipping if he said it again. When passing a public house, he would try to get in, and cry pleadingly: "Mamma, give me a drink of beer." The only thing to be done was to make up a strong drink of something else, unintoxicating, but the child said: "This ain't beer, mum; I want beer." The lady managed at last to wean the child from the drink. His father had from his boy's infancy been in the habit of giving him a drink of beer.

JUDGMENT

498. Many assume an attitude of superiority over others. They arrogate to themselves work which rightly belongs to God. They love to sit in judgment, heeding not the command: "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1). Faultfinding is their forte. They are never happy unless making others miserable. They close their eyes to the good, but never fail to notice inconsistencies, shams, abuses, and so on. This is the carrion upon which such vultures feed.

Such a censorious spirit is detrimental to the interests of Christ's kingdom. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (Jas. 1:20). Such a spirit is injurious to self. The hypercritical hurl their anathemas, forgetting that they rebound upon themselves. "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you" (Matt. 7:2).

God is our Judge, and the judgment, which follows wrongdoing as surely as day follows night, is coming. "But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God" (Rom. 14:10). "For the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Pet. 1:4, 17). "But the heavens that now are, and

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the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (2 Pet. 3:7).

These Scriptures teach that judgment is reserved till the day of days. Then, "there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed: and hid, that shall not be known" (Matt. 10:26).

In that great day, God's judgment will be no surprise to man. He will be judged, not by some new law, but according to the old statute-book—the Bible. "If any man hear my sayings, and keep them not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:47, 48). "He that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18).

499. "Human judgment is self-betrayal. By the judgment with which we judge, we are ourselves judged. We should be more slow to judge if we realised that the judgment we utter transfers us instantly from the judge's bench to the prisoner's bar."

500. A man was complaining of his neighbours. "I never saw such a wretched set of people," he said, "as are in this village. They are mean, greedy of gain, selfish, and careless of the needs of others. Worst of all, they are forever speaking evil of one another." "Is it really so?" said an angel who happened to be walking with him. "It is indeed," said the man. "Why, only look at this fellow coming toward us! I know his face, though I cannot just remember his name. See his little, shark-like, cruel eyes darting here and there like a ferret's, and the lines of covetousness about his mouth! The very droop of his shoulders is mean and cringing, and he slinks along instead of walking." "It is very clever of you to see all this," said the angel, "but there is one thing which you did not perceive." "What is that?" asked the man. "That it is a looking-glass we are approaching," said the angel.—*Baptist World*.

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501. "Avoid the eye that discovers with rapidity the bad, and is slow to see the good."

"Judge not thy neighbour, till thou hast put thyself in his place."

"There are some squeamish people," said Douglas Jerrold, "who, having but little honesty themselves, make up for the want by their uncharitable suspicions of others."

502. The Romans had a wise proverb: "Pronounce on no man's life till it is over."

503. "Many a tree as it stands in the forest looks fair, fine, solid, and valuable, which, when cut down and sawed up for use, reveals perhaps rottenness, cross-grain, and knots. There are men who move in the circles of society, who, to judge by the appearance, are almost all that you could wish them to be in moral conduct; but when death shall have mowed them down, and the judgment shall have examined them, what will be the heart-infidelity, the secret sins, the unchristian principles, which shall be disclosed, rendering them totally unfit for the Master's use in the glorious building of the heavenly temple."

504. When God prepares a hammer, it will not be made of silk.—*Horace Bushnell.*

505. Down in the Southland the colored people have a song which runs like this:

"He sees all we do; He hears all we say:
My God's a-writing all the time."

But you are writing, too. In the British Museum there is a piece of stone about half the size of my Bible, which is probably five thousand years old, and in the middle of the stone there is the mark of a bird's foot. Five thousand years ago, when the stone was soft, the bird put its foot upon it, and the mark has been there ever since. My God is writing all the time, and so are you.—*J. W. Chapman.*

506. About a quarter of a century ago an infidel got up on one of the heights of Catskill Mountains, and, in the presence

of some atheistic companions, defied the God of heaven to show Himself in battle. He swung his sword to and fro, and challenged the Almighty to meet him in single combat. The Almighty paid no attention to him, of course, but He just commissioned a little gnat, so small that it could scarcely be seen by a microscope, to lodge in his windpipe and choke him to death.—*Dr. Pierson.*

507. "A visitor at the hospice of St. Bernard in the Alps tells of one of the noble dogs coming in one morning holding his head and tail to the ground, and slinking away to a dark corner of his kennel, as if ashamed to look any one in the face. The monks explained to the visitor that the dog had not been able to find anybody in the snow that morning to rescue, and therefore was ashamed to come in from the search. How will it be with us when we reach the end of our life, if we have not rescued any one from the storms and the dangers?"

508. "On the banks of Niagara, where the rapids begin to swell and swirl most desperately preparatory to their final plunge, is a sign-board which bears the following sign: 'Past redemption point.' Even while one feels the firm soil beneath his feet, a shiver of horror passes through one's soul as he looks off upon the turbulent waters, and realises the full significance of the sign. None can retrace their steps, if past that point."

JUSTIFICATION

509. To justify is to make just or righteous. It is more than pardon. A criminal may be pardoned, but he remains guilty for all that. Nor is it merely a hiding or covering of sin. The sin remains, however much it may be hidden or covered. Justification is far richer and better than either or both of these. David, in Ps. 32: 1, 2, expresses the distinction between these blessings, in an ascending scale. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity." The non-imputation of sin is justification. It is to make the guilty not guilty. This is indeed a marvel of divine grace.

But how can mortal, sinful man be just with God? How can

God be just and the Justifier of the ungodly? "All have sinned, and come short of God's glorious perfection." How, then, is it possible to obliterate man's sin? This crowning act of God's grace is made possible and becomes a blessed fact to all who are "IN CHRIST JESUS." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom of God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30). Christ is perfect, sinless; and the obedient believer is made "complete in him." God beholds us in his Son, and is well pleased with all in him. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). We are thereby made "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4); "partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:10).

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

510. *Justification is by faith without antecedent good works, but not with succedent good works.* Previous to faith in Christ, no human action is good in God's sight. All acts without faith are deeds of sin; whatever is not of faith is sin; without faith it is impossible to please God. Before faith man is ungodly, and his works are like himself. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous." Now, what God proposes in the gospel is to justify the ungodly—to make just those who have not been just, right, or righteous. As it is written: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness." . . . Grace saves, not *of*, but *unto*, works. Justification is by faith without works of righteousness which we have done, but not without works of righteousness which God has ordained for our doing. God has ordained a certain order of things in Christ Jesus. . . . They are put in contrast with all and sundry schemes of human righteousness—with every kind and order of self-righteousness. The Jews, being ignorant of this righteousness of God, went about to establish their own righteousness, and, seeking to establish their own, did not, of course, submit themselves to the righteousness of God. They did not see Christ to be the end of the law for

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righteousness to all the believing, and they therefore did not obey the word of the faith, which says: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Reader, if you would be justified by God, do as He prescribed in the gospel of His grace. Hope not for justification in His sight by any human plan. Seek not for it by any attempt to establish your own righteousness. Possess it by submitting yourself to the righteousness of God.—*T. H. Milner.*

511. "A very good and wholesome doctrine" of Scripture is justification by faith. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). This has been perverted into the unscriptural doctrine of "justification by faith alone." This makes faith the only condition of salvation. The answer to the Philippian jailor is usually quoted to prove this position: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). But notice, it does not say "only believe." The command to believe is followed by preaching and baptism. "The devils believed, and trembled"—but they remained devils still. "Among the chief rulers also many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue." Their belief was worthless, because they would not take sides with Christ. . . . A large brick building was being demolished. A strong rope had been fastened to the top of one of the walls, and a workman instructed to pull steadily from the other end. He did so. A fellow-workman couldn't see any benefit in doing that, and laughingly joked the other man about it. The workman pulled away, and just answered: "The boss told me to do this, and I guess he knows the purpose of it." In a little while the wall crashed to the ground. The pulling on the rope was just part of the plan. And because the workman had faith in the master-builder, he did as he was told.—*H. G. Harward.*

512. "The virtue of faith lies in the virtue of the object." That object, in the matter of justification, so the Scriptures

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assure us, is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who died for us and rose again. When lately the vast dam of the Nile was completed, with all its giant sluices, there needed but one touch of a finger on an electric button to swing majestically open the gates of the barrier and so to let through the Nile in all its mass and might. There was the simplest possible contact. But it was contact with forces and appliances adequate to control or liberate at pleasure the great river. So faith, in reliance of the soul, the soul perhaps of the child, perhaps of the peasant, perhaps of the outcast, is only a radiant look, a reliant touch. But it sets up contact with Jesus Christ, in all His greatness, in His grace, merit, saving power, eternal love.—*H. C. G. Moule.*

513. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God;" *i. e.*, we enter into the state of peace immediately. "Peace is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." And he is a rich man who has a thousand acres of corn in the ground, as well as he who has so much in his barn, or the money in his purse. They have rest and peace in the seed of it, when they have it not in the fruit; they have rest in the promise, when they have it not in possession; and he is a rich man who has good bonds and bills for a great sum of money, if he have not twelvenpence in his pocket. All believers have the promise, have rest and peace granted them under God's own hand, in many promises which faith brings them under; and we know that the truth and faithfulness of God stand engaged to make good every line and word of the promise to them. So that, though they have not a full and clear actual sense and feeling of rest, they are, nevertheless, by faith come into a state of rest.—*Flavel.*

THE KINGDOMS

514. God has never been without a kingdom. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Ps. 45:6). "By me kings reign" (Prov. 8:15). God is the almighty ruler, the "Lord of lords, and King of kings."

Most relative Scriptures allude to God's kingdom in a more limited sense. God established a kingdom amongst the Israelites. "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all

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people; for the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:5, 6). The children of Israel obeyed not God's voice, and kept not His covenant. They desired an earthly king. God granted their request, but the succession of kings chosen departed from the way of the Lord.

In infinite wisdom and love God promised, through Daniel, another kingdom. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2:44). John the Baptist preached, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2).

We are told when that kingdom was established. It was when our Lord rose from the grave, and was exalted to God's right hand, "a Prince and a Saviour." (See Acts 2:29, 36.) From His throne He poured out His Spirit upon His disciples, "as the Redeemer's coronation gift," and Peter, filled with the Spirit, preached the first sermon, and announced that Jesus, whom they had crucified, had arisen, and ascended to sit upon the throne of David.

The conditions of entrance into the kingdom are plainly stated. "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

The nature of the kingdom is also defined. "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). It is composed of those who strive to do the will of God. "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth" (Matt. 6:10).

There is yet another kingdom. It is the kingdom of glory, which is the kingdom of grace perfected; men pass into the kingdom of glory via the kingdom of grace. There is no other road. "At Athens there were two temples—a temple of virtue, and a temple of honor—and there was no going into the temple of honor but through the temple of virtue." So, to enter the heavenly kingdom, we must pass through the kingdom of grace. Yet, strange to say, many aspire after heaven, who shun the kingdom upon earth.

515. In the Scriptures there are four uses of the phrase "kingdom of God," or words of the same import.

1. The kingdom of God universal and eternal (Ps. 103:19).

2. The kingdom of God before Christ (Ex. 19:5; 2 Chron. 13:5, 8; Dan. 4:3, 34, 35).

3. The kingdom of God from Christ's first advent to His second (Dan. 2:44; Matt. 3:2).

4. The kingdom of God in a yet future and glorious dispensation (2 Pet. 1:11).

This comprehensive view of our theme is very useful. Christians whose minds are much engrossed by the kingdom of God yet future are apt to think all references to the kingdom of God are to this future kingdom, and to give unnatural explanations of those passages which refer to the past or present kingdom of God. There is no need for this. We can easily make room in our minds for all four applications of the title. God had the Hebrews as His kingdom; He has also established a kingdom of a higher order; and He will also yet establish a glorious and eternal kingdom. Yet, before any of these, and all the while, everything is ruled by Him: all laws, all intelligences, obedient or disobedient, in heaven, earth, or hell, are ruled by "heaven's exalted King."—*Lancelot Oliver*.

516. Other men have said: "If I could only live, I would establish and perpetuate a kingdom." This Christ of Galilee said: "My death shall do it."—*Herrick Johnson*.

517. As a kingdom, divided into many shires, and more towns and villages, is called one, because it hath one and the same king, one and the same law; so the kingdom of our Lord Jesus is one, because it liveth by one and the same Spirit, and is ruled by one and the same Lord, and professeth one and the same faith; hath one and the same hope, and hath been baptised with one and the same baptism.—*Rogers*.

518. When Alexander the Great set forward upon his great exploits before leaving Macedonia, he divided amongst his captains and nobles *all* his property. On being rebuked by a friend for having, as he thought, acted so foolishly in parting with all his possessions, reserving nothing for himself, Alexander replied: "I have reserved for myself much more than I have given away; I have reserved for myself the *hope of universal monarchy*; and when, by the valour and help of these my cap-

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tains and nobles, I shall be monarch of the world, the gifts I have parted with will come back to me with an increase of a thousand-fold." So Christ sacrificed all for the joy set before Him of establishing a kingdom of subjects who should render grateful homage by presenting all for His service.

519. In Mr. Wyatt Gill's "Jottings from the Pacific" he tells us of a common sailor who settled on the island of Niutao, "as missionary on his own account." This eccentric individual, having first won over the chief, proceeded to convert the heathen natives "with a loaded revolver and some bowie-knives." Mr. Gill gives us the result of this "propaganda by force" in a sentence. This is all he says: "He failed, and in disgust left the island." Yet let us not single out this strange buccaneer missionary for undue blame. The weapons of his warfare were carnal truly, yet, in the employment of them, he was but copying a system which only slowly has ceased from active operation amongst ourselves. Happy are we to-day in having embraced the better way. Sometimes it may seem slow to the world; but it is sure, and its results abide, enduring even the stress of persecution.—*William Pearce.*

520. I remember, when in Wales, seeing the men working in the quarries there. A man is suspended by a rope half-way down the stone quarry, and I have seen him there for a length of time boring a hole in the rock; and after spending much care and toil and time in boring the hole to a sufficient depth, I have seen him fill it with some black dust, and if I did not know what power lodged in that black dust, I should say, "What a fool that man was to spend so much time in boring a hole in the rock, and then fill it up again!" But I know that black dust is powder. There is a wonderful explosive power in it. And then, when he has filled the hole with powder, he has applied his fuse and lighted his match, and while the fuse was burning in the direction of the powder he has taken the opportunity of fleeing to a distance by climbing up the rope to the mountain-top. Well, that is the kind of work being done with the object of extending the kingdom of our Lord in heathen lands. At present our missionaries are preparing the way. They are *cutting a hole into the very rock of heathendom*, and they

are filling it up with the powder of divine truth. What we want is fire from heaven to touch it. And God is doing it. He is preparing the people. By and by we shall have a mighty upheaving in this rock of heathenism and ignorance and superstition, and from it polished stones to adorn the temple of our Lord.—*Richard Roberts.*

521. It is a comfortable speech which the emperor used to Galba in his childhood and minority, when he took him by the chin and said: "Thou, Galba, shalt one day sit upon a throne." Thus it cheereth the saints of God, however mean soever they be in the eyes of the world, that they shall one day reign with Christ in the kingdom of heaven.—*Spencer.*

LORD'S DAY

522. Reason tells us that one day of rest a week is needed by body, mind, and spirit. To Christians, justice demands that at least so much time each week should be consecrated to God. Observance of the Lord's Day is a thankful acknowledgment of innumerable favours received, and assists in relaxing our hold upon things transitory, and fixing our thoughts upon things invisible and eternal.

In this, Moses is not our authority. The Sabbath law was given upon Mount Sinai, but is now abrogated, for Christ has "blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross" (Col. 2:14). "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second" (Heb. 8:7). "We are not under law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14).

Many confound the Jewish Sabbath with the Christian Lord's Day. The early disciples knew the difference. The one was the last day of the week; the other, the first day.

Upon the first day of the week our Lord rose from the dead (Mark 16:9), met with His disciples, and broke bread with them (Luke 24:30), poured His Spirit upon the worshippers on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), and on that day the first disciples met together to break bread (Acts 20:7).

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None should begrudge one day in seven for acts of devotion and works of love. Yet many fancy that with impunity they can use the day in business pursuits, holiday-making, or amusements, and the utter neglect of public worship. Paul delineates the character of such professors when he says "that in the last days grievous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of self . . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

523. Christians, what a difference between the Jewish Sabbath, and this day of triumph! They have much to learn of the glory of Christianity who think that merely going to a synagogue, and hearing a discourse, and returning to their firesides, is suitable to the design or expressive of the import of this joyful and triumphant day. On this day, Messiah entered Jerusalem as son of David, as King of Judah. On this day He rose from the dead. On this day, after His resurrection, He generally met with His disciples in their assemblies. On this day He sent the Holy Spirit down from heaven and erected the first Christian church. On this day the disciples came together to break bread. On this day the Christians joined in the fellowship of the saints, or in making contributions for the saints. And on this day the Spirit finished its work of revelation on the isle of Patmos, in giving to John the beloved the last secrets of the divine plan ever to be uttered in human language while time endures. If no authoritative precedent enforced the assembly of saints on this day, and the observance of the order of the Lord's house, the very circumstance of such a coincidence of glorious wonders would point it out as the Lord's Day: and love to Him, the most powerful principle that ever impelled to action, would constrain all saints not to forsake the assembling of themselves on this day, but to meet, to animate and to be animated; to remember, to admire, to adore; to hymn, in songs divine, the glorious and mighty King. Christians, could you say no?—*Alexander Campbell.*

524. A gentleman, who was passing some mines in Pennsylvania, asked a little boy why the field was so full of mules. "These mules are worked in the mines through the week,"

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replied the boy, "and they are brought up into the light on Sunday to keep them from going blind." The application is apparent.

525. Stations on the line of your journey are not your journey's end, but each one brings you nearer. Such are our Lord's Days. A haven is not home, but it is a place of quiet and rest where the rough waves are stayed. Such is the Lord's Day. A garden is a piece of common land, and yet it has ceased to be common land. It is an effort to regain paradise. Such is the Lord's Day. A bud is not a flower, but it is the promise of a flower. Such is the Lord's Day. The world's week tempts you to sell your soul to the flesh and the world. The Lord's Day calls you to remembrance, and begs you rather to sacrifice earth to heaven and time to eternity, than heaven to earth and eternity to time. The six days not only chain you as captives of the earth, but do their best to keep the prison doors shut, that you may forget the way out. The Lord's Day sets before you an open door. Samson has carried the gates away. The Lord's Day summons you to the threshold of your house of bondage, to look forth into immortality, *your immortality*.—*J. Pulsford*.

526. Sunday should strike the key-note for the week.—*Dr. Wilbur Chapman*.

527. One Sunday forenoon, while on his way to church, in a deluge of rain, Spurgeon was accosted by an acquaintance, who remarked, in a doleful tone of voice: "This is a dreadful day, Mr. Spurgeon." "Nonsense, my good sir," was the cheery reply. "This is the day that the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

528. Returning from America on board the steamship "Manuka," I got into conversation with a Christian man who, speaking of his work for Christ during many years, said: "When I used to arrive home from my business on Saturday afternoons, I would hang my workaday coat on the hook, and say, 'Thank the Lord, I'm His till Monday morning.'" He meant, of course, that he was the Lord's for special service on His own day.

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529. "A Christian man was once urged by his employer to work on Sunday. 'Does not your Bible say that if your ass falls into a pit on the Sabbath, you may pull him out?' 'Yes,' replied the other; 'but if the ass had the habit of falling into the same pit every Sabbath, I would either fill up the pit or sell the ass.'"

530. When a gentleman was inspecting a house in Newcastle, with a view to hiring it as his residence, the landlord took him to the upper window, expatiated on the extensive prospect, and added: "You may see Durham Cathedral from this window on a Sunday." "Why on a Sunday above every other day?" enquired our friend, with some degree of surprise. The reply was conclusive enough. "*Because on that day there is no smoke* from those tall chimneys." Blessed be the Lord's Day to us, when the earth smoke of care and turmoil no longer beclouds our view; then can our souls full often behold the goodly land and the city of the new Jerusalem.—C. H. Spurgeon.

531. "One Sunday morning a lady, stepping into a cab in order to ride to a place of worship, asked the driver 'if ever he went to church.' She received the following reply: 'No, madam, I am so busy in taking others there that I cannot possibly find time to go myself.'"

532. Some try to find ways and means of satisfying the conscience, and yet do a little business on the Lord's Day. A certain minister and elder in Perthshire managed well even "between the preachin's." "Had it not been Sunday, Mr. Blank," remarked the preacher, "I would have asked you how the hay was selling in Perth on Friday." "Well, sir," replied the sessional *confrere*, "had it no been the day that it is, I wad just hae tell't ye it was gaun at a shillin' the stane." "Indeed! Well, had it been Monday instead of Sunday, I would have told you that I have some to sell." "Imphm, ay, ow ay, sir. An, had it been Monday, as ye say, then I wad just hae tell't ye I wad gie ye market price for it." The significant nod which the minister gave to this last remark brought the elder with a couple of carts to the manse on Monday morning, and before midday the minister's haystack was *non est*.—Wm. Sinclair, in "*Scottish Life and Humour*."

LORD'S SUPPER

533. The church at Jerusalem, established and set in order by Christ's apostles, was designed to be a pattern to churches for all time. The first converts, having heard and obeyed the gospel, "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

Similar observances were obligatory in all the primitive assemblies of Christ's disciples.

To the Corinthians (1 Cor. 11:2) Paul wrote: "Now I praise you that ye remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you."

Much apostacy would have been prevented if only churches had continued to observe the ordinances as delivered to them, and contended unceasingly "for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). But men imagined that they could improve upon the divine order; hence, the Lord's Supper is observed monthly, quarterly, and sometimes yearly, the excuse for not partaking of the emblems weekly being that the ordinance would thus become too common. Common!! Surely the truly thankful soul is incapable of that argument. Can penitent, grateful souls remember their Lord too often? Those who excuse themselves thus must not forget that their attitude is in reality an impeachment upon the mind of God and the plan He has devised.

To observe the Lord's Supper was the main reason for the assembling together of the early church. Hebrews 10 represents the forsaking of assembling themselves together as one of the causes of the apostacy of many, for then there was no more sacrifice for sins, because they fell into the hands of the living God.

The Lord's Supper is in memory of Christ: "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).

It is declarative: "Ye proclaim the Lord's death, till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26).

It points backward to Calvary, and forward to glory, when the redeemed shall sit around the heavenly board.

534. The second chapter of the Acts records the first gospel preaching under this dispensation; the first baptisms into the

name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; also the inauguration of the first church: and that church, with others planted and set in order by the apostles, was designed, by the Head of the church, as a model for all time. In Acts 2:42 we are informed that the baptised continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread, as also in the fellowship and in the teaching of the apostles. The allusion is, most certainly, to some instituted breaking of bread, and not to ordinary eating. In Christianity we find but one ordinance in which bread has a place—that commonly designated “The Lord’s Supper.”—*David King.*

535. The Saviour gave no intimation as to when the Supper should be observed. It was not needful for Him to fix the time, as He purposed to baptise His apostles in the Holy Spirit, and thus to guide them into all truth, that they might legislate for the church. The apostles have given us the Lord’s Day and the Lord’s Supper—the one commemorating His resurrection, while the other shows forth His death. Fifty-two times in the year we commemorate the resurrection, by observing the day; and surely reason requires that the death should be commemorated with the same frequency. . . . In Acts 20:7 we read: “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow.” Paul, it appears, had sailed from Philippi and been five days in reaching Troas, where he abode seven days, and then partook of the feast with the disciples, ready to depart the next day. Now, why name this waiting, if it were customary to break the bread daily? Evidently Paul waited the number of days intervening between his arrival and the day of commemoration, and then, after breaking bread with the church, he departed. No doubt journeys then (as they now are by those who regard New Testament order) were arranged, as far as possible, to secure at least one Lord’s Day—one celebration of the feast—with the church visited. “On the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread.” . . . True, we do not find the word *every* in the narrative, and it has been objected that “*the* first of the week” may not be equivalent to *every* first of the week. We answer, neither is the word *every* found in reference to the Jewish Sabbath. “Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but the seventh day

is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." Is not "*the seventh day*" equal in signification to *'every seventh day'*? Most certainly! The like truth appears from Paul to the Corinthians. On *the* first day of the week they came together. He clearly intimated that the intention of their coming together was to eat the Lord's Supper, but that in their divided state they could not eat so as to make it the Supper of the Lord. Thus, in apostolic example, we have the law of the ordinance as to frequency—the Lord's table every Lord's Day.—*David King*.

536. The Lord's Supper is memorative, and so it has the nature and use of a pledge or token of love, left by a dying to a dear surviving friend. It is like a ring plucked off from Christ's finger, or a bracelet from His arm, or rather His picture from His breast, delivered to us with such words as these: "As oft as you look on this, remember me; let this help to keep me alive in your remembrance when I am gone, and out of sight."—*Flavel*.

537. Now, if you ask me why Christ called the sign by the name of the thing itself, I ask thee again, Mayest thou say, when thou seest the picture of the Queen, "This is the Queen"? or when thou seest the picture of a lion, "This is a lion"? And may not Christ say when He sees a thing like His body, "This is my body"? . . . The reason why the signs have the names of the things is to strike a deep reverence in us to receive the symbols of Christ reverently and holily, as if that Christ were there present in body and blood Himself.—*Smith*.

538. "An aged man once broke out in an exciting manner, describing battles he had fought with wild beasts, telling most graphically how he was attacked, and how he conquered. His friends asked, 'When was it?' 'Why, only yesterday,' he replied; 'haven't you heard about it?' As a matter of fact, it happened sixty or seventy years ago. Memory had broken down all the bridges of time and space, turned life back upon itself, and made a century ago become as yesterday. This is exactly the philosophy of the Lord's Supper. 'Do this in remembrance of me.' Let nineteen hundred years drop out of sight. Let the two ends of the dispensations be folded together like a scroll.

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Let the table be spread in the upper chamber of Jerusalem. Let Christ our Master break the bread, and distribute the cup for us. We are guests of Jesus to-day, and His death upon the cross is such a commanding event that it is possible for Him to be as near to us, and us to Him, as though He had lived but yesterday."

539. "A missionary from the East once said that one of the hindrances to the elevation of the people was that the families did not eat together. Very much of our acquaintance, of mutual help and love, comes from the family gatherings at the daily meals. The feasts of the church together at the Lord's Supper, the meeting often with God and His people, are great helps to a more intimate acquaintance and a deeper love."

540. Two friends, intimately united, lose sight, in some sense, of the difference which there may be between their respective conditions. This, too, is what the believer experiences at the Lord's table. On the one part, though there must ever be an immeasurable abyss between God and us, we go to Him as to our brother, as to our friend. . . . And on the other part God is pleased to lay aside, in condescension to our weakness, if the expression be lawful, the rays of His divine majesty, with which the eyes of mortals would be dazzled into blindness.—*Saurin*.

541. Suppose we had a friend who had redeemed us from the galleys, restored us from servitude, redeemed our lives, installed us in a large inheritance, and was to take a long journey, promising to return again, leaving with us his picture, which he would have us look upon at some special seasons, and express in that method a particular mindfulness of him. Though we could not without an inexcusable ingratitude forget him had we not that picture, yet it were but an unworthy return to deny the observance of so small an order to a friend to whom we owe ourselves. This is all the picture Christ has left of Himself; He never appointed any images or crucifixes, never imprinted the features of His face upon Veronica's napkin. Is it not ingratitude to neglect the remembrance of Him in His own method, when He might have put hard conditions upon us; and when it is not a mere sight of Him, but a spiritual feast with Him?—*Charnock*.

542. A portrait in oils by a great artist may be viewed in different lights. To the utterly unartistic eye it may be esteemed or valued according to the cost of the frame, the paint and the canvas. A farmer once exclaimed, when told of the value of a certain picture: "Why, I could paint all the fences and buildings on my farm at one-tenth of the amount." But the artistic eye sees in the picture beauties that fill his soul with rapturous delight. So to the unspiritual the Lord's Supper is mere bread and wine, and so little of it that it is worthless. But the spiritual eye sees the portrait of Jesus, not merely the bodily form, dying on the cross; but the loving heart of the Redeemer is laid bare to view as it is nowhere else.

543. Most people are familiar with a remarkable and striking picture that appeared some years ago, copies of which were to be seen in most artists' windows. It was the picture of a skull or death's-head. At a distance it was that and nothing more. A picture to make one shudder. But on drawing near to it the picture was transformed into life and beauty. Thus we see in the Lord's Supper not alone the horrible death of agony and shame. We see also the amazing love of God and of Christ, and also our glorious redemption.

LOVE

544. Three short words may be said to sum up the sublimest truths of divine revelation. "God is love." Our religion commences in God's infinite love to fallen man, for "we love, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19), and it is complete in our love to Him and our neighbours, for "on these two commandments hangeth the whole law, and the prophets." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and "thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-40).

It must never be forgotten that our love to others is a necessary corollary of love to God. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen" (1 John 4:20). By making the principle of love supreme in the soul, man reaches the full standard of his being, and manifests, by disposition, deed, and word, precisely the same

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quality of love as God does, though, at best, infinitely less in degree.

Love is essential. It cannot be dispensed with. Other qualities are helpful, but this is the supreme need, minus which all other qualities sink into nothingness, for "if I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1).

Love is the mighty power for service: "the love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. 5:14). It seeks to impart of itself to others. A man may have money, and keep it. He cannot love, and not give it.

Love is patient, kind, unenvious, humble, unselfish. (See 1 Cor. 4.) Love "covereth a multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8). It draws a curtain over the failings of others. Excuses their remissness. "Taketh no account of evil" (1 Cor. 13:5). Sees the good in them, and never rejoices in unrighteousness.

This grace must be cultivated. Jesus spoke to His apostles not so much of the evidences of miracles, as of love. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

There are no better incentives to the cultivation of love than (1) the contemplation of God's love, and (2) the performance of acts of love. Greater victories await those who love aright than they ever dreamed of.

545. What is this greatest of passions called love? There is no word harder to get a satisfactory definition of. Because, whatever you say about it, there comes quickly to your mind some one who loves you, or you think of the passion that burns in your own heart for some one. And, as you think of that, no words that anybody may use seem at all strong enough, or tender enough, to tell what love is, as you know it in your inner heart.

Yet I think this much can be said: Love is the tender, strong outgoing of your whole being to another. It is a passion burning like a fire within you, for some other one. Every mention of that name stirs the flame into new burning. Every passing or lingering thought of him or her is like fresh air making the flames leap up more eagerly. And each personal contact is a clearing out of all the ashes, and a turning on of all the

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draughts, to feed new oxygen for stronger, fresher burning.—*S. D. Gordon.*

546. You may hammer ice on an anvil, or bray it in a mortar. But it is pounded ice still, except for the portion melted by the heat of percussion, and it will soon freeze again. Melt it in the sun, and it flows down in sweet water, which mirrors that light which loosed its bonds of cold. So, hammer away at unbelief with your logical sledge-hammers, and you will change its shape, perhaps; but it is none the less unbelief because you have ground it to powder. It is a mightier agent that must melt it—the fire of God’s love—brought close by a will itself ablaze with sacred glow.—*Alex. Maclaren.*

547. “A gentleman was visiting a convict, a notorious criminal, in his cell. He took his little child with him. He endeavored to show the man how that he had offended God as well as man, and God was an angry Judge, but he forgot to say He was a God of love. The man was unmoved. The little child had been watching him, and went up, and put her little hand on his knee, and looked up at him with the sweet, confiding eyes of childhood. ‘Mr. Convict,’ she said, ‘I loves ’oo, and God loves ’oo.’ The poor fellow brushed away the tears fast gathering in his eyes, and said: ‘My God, I can’t stand this: it breaks my heart.’”

548. A mill-wheel may be turned—either by a current of water flowing underneath, or by a stream falling upon it from above. Of the two, the latter is the more efficient. There are two ways of moving men in the religious life. The first is a profound apprehension of “the terror of the Lord”; it is the undershot current, and moves men from beneath. The other is a sweet and lively experience of His love; it is the overshot current, and excites men from above.—*J. C. Jones.*

549. “Love seeketh not her own.” So far from rushing into any unseemliness in seeking to display itself, so far from trampling upon the rights of others, love does not even claim her own. “Love seeketh not her own.” She claims no rights where moral principle is involved, and on this she takes a stand, and

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the gates of hell can not prevail against her. There is a quaint, grey monument in the sweet old town of Appleby, which was built in the days of the Puritans, and on which these words are inscribed: "Maintain your loyalty; preserve your rights." Maintain your rights! Aye, but they were the crown rights of manhood—freedom to oppose iniquity, freedom to worship God—and the very love in the hearts of those strong old Puritans made them claim the rights, and support their claim by death. There are rights which true love will never relinquish. She will always seek her own. On the other hand, there are rights which true love is ever prepared to yield to others. If love had a right to the uppermost seat at a feast, and somebody else has got it, love would seek not her own, but would gracefully insist on the rights of the other. . . . Is not this the way of love? Would not this be the way of Christ? How many opportunities there are, in the whole round of life, where love might graciously abdicate its own rights for the comfort and interest of others. Let us keep our eyes open, that when the Master gives us such opportunity, we may use it according to His desire. And, some day, when the evening of our life is come, He will come to us, and because we have sought not our own, but have cheerfully yielded to others, He will whisper to us, "Friend, go up higher," and the word will make us leap for joy as we enter the eternal world. "Love seeketh not her own."—*J. W. Jowett.*

550. Morlais Jones tells of a little poem written by Browning called "One Word More." He says the idea is this: An Italian artist finds that there is more in him than he can express upon canvas, so he takes to sculptor work. He does not give up painting, but considers that he can express upon marble or stone with hammer and chisel that which cannot be expressed upon canvas. Browning compares himself to that artist in addressing the wife he so much loved. He had striven to express his affection in many ways, but at last wrote the "One Word More." "So," says Mr. Jones, "our Saviour expressed His love in many ways—in creation, in the Old Testament Scriptures, in His ministry on earth, but 'Calvary' is the 'one word more.'"

551. "A visitor to a London hospital tells of a patient who was under treatment for a burnt wrist. Upon her arm were

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the tattooed words, 'Jim loves me, and I love Jim'—words which she had tried to obliterate with nitric acid. One of the two had proved faithless, and she, poor girl, had injured herself in the endeavour to remove the signs which had been written in the ardour of real affection. But God's love never changes. He loves with 'an everlasting love.'"

552. "From old crusading-times comes this story. A certain king, on his way back from the Holy Land, was captured by enemies and cast into prison—where, none of his friends knew. The king had a favorite minstrel, who determined to find his master. He went throughout the country, pausing before the door of every prison, singing the songs he had been wont to sing in the palace of the king. He hoped thus to find the captive monarch. Long he journeyed in vain, but at last, as he stood before a prison window and sang, he heard a voice within, the voice of him he sought. The old songs sung at the prison window were heard by the captive, who was soon released. So the messengers of Christ should go through the world singing the song of Christ's love before every prison door."

553. "It is said that when Michael Angelo contemplated painting his great picture of the crucifixion, he had the story read to him from each of the Gospels while he sat blindfolded. He listened till his spirit was imbued with the spirit of the narrative, and then he took palette and brush and did the work which made his name immortal. It was the sight and thought of the cross that inspired him."

554. In one of his Birmingham sermons, J. H. Jowett says: "When I want to think of the love of God to thee and me, I do not reject the helpful suggestion of human motherhood, and fatherhood, and wifeness, and husbandhood, and childhood. Nay, rather do I listen to their music all the more eagerly, and in their love-strains I hear 'sweet snatches of the songs above,' faint echoes of the wonderful love of God. No, the love of our Father in heaven is not altogether unlike the love of all good fathers on earth. It is very like and yet very unlike; so like as to be akin, so unlike that it fills us with adoring wonder and praise; so like, as the vast organ and the harmonium are

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akin, and can express the same tune; so unlike that, as with the organ and the harmonium, one overwhelms the other in range and capacity, in height and depth, in length and breadth of musical glory. 'God loves you,' and you have heard a bit of the tune in your mother's love, in your father's love, in the love of your husband, in the love of your wife, in the love of your little child. Human love may be only as a child's earliest broken song in comparison with the 'Hallelujah' chorus, but it is akin."

555. "Hast thou observed, Doris, that thy future husband has lame feet?" "Yes, papa," said she, "I have seen it; but then he speaks to me so kindly and piously that I seldom pay attention to his feet." "Well, Doris, but young women generally look at a man's figure." "I, too, papa," was her reply; "but Wilhelm pleases me just as he is. If he had straight feet, he would not be Wilhelm Stilling; and how could I love him then?"

556. I look on this mother, who stands with her child on the side of the sinking vessel, watching the last chance of a passing boat. She seizes the opportunity, not to leap in herself, but, lifting her boy in her arms, and printing a last fond, loving kiss upon his lips, she drops him in, the mother herself remaining to drown and die. Or, I look at that noble maid in old border story, who, having caught a glimpse of the arrow that, shot by a rival's hand, came from the bushes on the other bank, flung herself before her lover, and received the quivering shaft in her own true and faithful heart. I look at these things, and, seeing *love to be as strong as death*, I urge you above all things to cultivate the love of Jesus, and pass on in its divine strength to the field of duty and the altar of sacrifice.—*Guthrie*.

MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

557. In the apostolic church, God raised up those who were, like their divine Master, to be ministers, or servants, to others. "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ; till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,

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unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13).

Thus, to some, supernatural gifts were imparted, which was essential in the establishment of the Christian system, but when the church was set up, the work was to be carried on by the natural abilities of its members, supplemented, of course, by divine help. "Having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting," etc. (Rom. 12:6-8).

Each member, according to ability, is to help in the work of the ministry. In Christ's church, sinecurism must have no place. All should use their gifts, some in the ministry of the Word, others in the diaconate, the work of Bible-school teaching, visitation, tract-distributing, and in countless other ways, "unto the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12).

558. We call attention to the fact that the ministry of the church, in the New Testament, is mutual and general; it is a ministry in which the members minister, according to gift or ability, to each other's good, and a ministry in which each and every member is to participate. Thus, in Romans 12, after a call to his readers to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, their reasonable service, Paul appeals to every man of them not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but so to think as to think soberly, according as God had dealt to each man a measure of faith. This *sober* thought, or, literally, sanity of thought, is the estimate of one's powers for service which is neither too high, urging to do what one has not the ability to do; nor too low, leading one to depreciate his powers and to remain idle, ministered unto, but not ministering. "For," says the apostle, "even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another."—*Lancelot Oliver*.

559. In the *Christian Endeavor World* a large front-page illustration was printed, called "A Moral Moving Staircase."

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It represented a lot of well-dressed men and women standing on steps, and being carried up a moving stairway by the minister, who is down below, turning the crank. His hat is beside him; on it could be seen the sign, "Free Tickets." Certain churches expect their preachers to furnish the lifting power for the moral elevation of the members whilst they ride free.

560. Christ, the one Shepherd, is not going to the one mountain to save the one lamb, but is sending us as a thousand shepherds into a thousand mountains to save a thousand lambs.—*C. R. Scoville.*

561. "A company of men were one day standing beside an engine. One said to the other: 'Supposing this engine represented the church, which part would you choose to be?' One said he would like to be the great driving-wheels; another, that he would be willing to be the truck-wheels, if only he could keep on the track; another said that he would like to be the headlight, and show up all obstructions and dangers in the way; another said he would like to be the pilot and clear the track of every obstacle; another wanted to be the whistle and sound out God's praises; another, the gospel bell to call all men to prayer and righteousness; one thought they might get under too much headway, and he said he would have to be the brake and hold them down. (You will have no trouble in securing the brake: that is the easiest task, and there will always be plenty of applicants for the position.) They had all spoken but one, when some one asked him to choose his place. The young man stood silent for a moment, then replied: 'Well, I don't know, men; but I would as lief be the coal as anything else, so long as it is necessary to make the engine go.'"

562. The wife of a man who had left the church and joined a fraternal order was asked why he was no longer a church-member. She replied: "Well, sir, they never gave my husband anything to do at the church, but as soon as he joined the lodge they put a helmet on his head and a sword in his hand and made him keeper of the royal and ancient arch, and he is there every night."—*H. A. Proctor.*

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563. When in Melbourne, Archibald Brown told of a man who was a member of the East London Tabernacle Church, for which he preached so long. This brother was uneducated, yet worked according to his ability with extraordinary enthusiasm. He approached Mr. Brown, offering to invite strangers to come to the meetings, and requesting that a certain number of seats be reserved for the use of those whom he would invite. One hundred and fifty seats were reserved, and this earnest worker always filled them up on Sunday evenings by personal "button-holing."

564. "In the old Welsh legend," says Lloyd George, "there is a story of a man who was given a series of what happened to be impossible tasks to perform ere he could reach the desires of his heart. Amongst other things he had to do was to recover every grain of seed sown in a large field, and bring it all in, without one missing, by sunset. He came to an ant-hill, and won all the hearts and enlisted the sympathies of the industrious little people. They spread over the field, and before sundown the seed was all in, except one, and as the sun was setting over the western skies a lame ant hobbled along with that grain also. Some of us have youth and suppleness of limb; some of us are crippled with years or infirmities, and we are at best but little ants, but we can all limp along with some share of the burden which must be carried."

565. Some years ago I was a guest at a small wedding dinner in New-York City. A Scotch-Irish gentleman, well known in that city, an old friend, spoke across the table to me. He said he had heard recently a story of the Scottish hills that he wanted to tell. And we all listened as he told this simple tale. . . . It was of a shepherd in the Scottish hills who had brought his sheep back to the fold for the night, and as he was arranging matters for the night he was surprised to find that two of the sheep were missing. He looked again. Yes, two were missing; and he knew which two. These shepherds are keen to know their sheep. He was much surprised, and went to the outhouse of his dwelling to call his collie. There she lay after the day's work, suckling her own little ones. He called her. She looked up at him. He said, "Two are missing"—holding up two fingers

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—“away by, collie, and get them.” Without moving, she looked up into his face, as though she would say: “You wouldn’t send me out again to-night? It’s been a long day—I’m so tired—not again to-night.” So her eyes seemed to say. And again, as many a time doubtless, “Away by, and get the sheep,” he said. And out she went. About midnight a scratching at the door aroused him. He found one of the sheep back. He cared for it. A bit of warm food, and the like. There the dog lay with her little ones. Again he called her. She looked up. “Get the other sheep,” he said. I do not know if you men listening are as fond of a good collie dog as I am. Their eyes seem human to me, almost, sometimes. And hers seemed so as she looked up, and seemed to be saying out of their great depths: “Not again—to-night? Haven’t I been faithful? I’m so tired—not again!” And again, as I suppose many a time before, “Away by, and get the sheep.” And out she went. About two or three again the scratching, and he found the last sheep back, badly torn; been down some ravine or gully. And the dog was plainly played. And yet she seemed to give a bit of a wag to her tired tail as though she would say: “There it is—I’ve done as you bade me—it’s back.” And he cared for its needs, and then, before lying down again to his own rest, thought he would go and praise the dog for her faithful work. You know how sensitive collies are to praise or criticism. He went out and stooped over with a pat and a kindly word, and was startled to find that the life-tether had slipped its hold. She lay there lifeless, with her little ones tugging at her body. . . . Our Master says: “There are *two missing*—aye, more than two—that you know—that you touch—that you can touch—that I died for. Go ye.”—*S. D. Gordon.*

MIRACLES

566. Miracles would “grow cheap by repetition.” They have served their purpose, and are no longer needed. Establishing new dispensations, the Almighty has, by miracles, proved their divine origin. In the days of Moses and of Christ, miracles were performed with the purpose of arousing men to an acknowledgment of the claims of their new leaders. They have done their work.

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Yet many, in our day, lay claim to the power to perform miracles, and manage to surround themselves with gullible folk who come for fleshly blessing. Jesus said: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

Miracles were the credentials of Christ and His apostles. They have been likened to the scaffolding of a rising temple. The church has been built, and the scaffolding of miracle removed. But the gospel, which is better than miracles, ever proving itself the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," is still sounded out. The prolonged sunshine of gospel blessings is infinitely preferable to the lightning flash of miracle.

The blind body doth not now open its eyes by a miracle of the Lord, but the blinded heart openeth its eyes to the word of the Lord. The mortal corpse doth not now rise again, but the soul doth rise again which lay dead in a living body. The ears of the deaf are not now opened, but many closed hearts now fly open at the penetration of divine truth, so that they believe who did not believe, and they live well who did live badly, and they obey who acted disobediently; and we exclaim: "Such a person is become a believer."—*Augustine*.

567. It has been often urged, that in the grand commission there is a promise running thus: "These signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils" etc. And it is argued that we have no right to separate this from the context. Our reply is that the separation has been made by God Himself. In support of the position, I offer the following dilemma. If we are not to confine the promise to the apostolic era, but must consider it as absolute and universal in its aspect, the case will stand thus: "If there have been believers in all ages without supernatural power, the promise in the commission has been falsified. On the other hand, if the promise has not been verified, because the conditions of belief and obedience have been absent, then we are forced to the dreadful conclusion that there have been no believers since apostolic days! and the gates of hell have prevailed against the church. This choice of impalement is offered to all who are looking for the restoration of miraculous power. On one of

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these horns they must be tossed; and so far as a matter of comfort is concerned, it matters little which. In reply to this it may be urged: "You assume that miraculous power has departed from the church; but *we* insist that in all ages God has raised up witnesses with spiritual gifts." Well, if you assert that miraculous power has existed in all ages, as you cannot require us to prove a negative, the *onus probandi*, the burden of the proof, lies upon you. And in order either to help you or thwart you, I will reveal another gulf, over which you cannot leap—you must tumble in and flounder there. That church which constitutes the heart of the apostasy, spotted over with the leprosy of every crime, and crimsoned with the blood of millions of saints, has invariably laid claim to miracles. On the contrary, various protesting bodies, raised up by God from one age to another, have laid in no such claim. . . . Surely this looks ominous towards our miracle friends. If they are determined to find miracles, will they pass by all the hosts of godly men who, according to their light, were faithful to God, Christ, truth, and holiness, and rest for refuge in the sanctuary of atheism and blasphemy, and the sink of every iniquity?—G. Greenwell.

568. It is generally assumed, says the above writer, by those who look for the restoration of such gifts, that an increase of union, love, and holiness would necessarily ensue. The only way to dissect this assumption, is to construct an argument from analogy. If we turn to the old dispensation, we find that the generation most highly favored by the witness of stupendous miracles made no corresponding progress in holiness; but, on the contrary, perished in the wilderness, through unbelief, whilst many of the succeeding nations (especially the next) were strong in faith and comparatively pure in conduct. If we come from the old to the new dispensation, we may examine the history of the Corinthian church, where the miraculous gifts existed in all their plenitude. What a melancholy page is opened to us, of faction, division, impurity, presumption, disorder, doctrine, institute, and morals, all deranged and corrupted together by vainglorious men. It appears then, from these facts, that the design of miracles has been misapprehended: as arresting evidence, or authenticating marks, they

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are complete. . . . After the Christian arch has been reared in massive grandeur, and spread abroad in comprehensive girth, why should we give ourselves any unnatural toil, in striving to bring back the scaffolding? It is the labour of Titans, which cannot profit, but may ultimately crush those who gratuitously carry such heavy burdens!

569. Did you ever read of a boy who stood on a muddy road and promised God he would be a Christian if there and then God would dry up the puddles? He wanted a *miracle* to make him a believer. . . . The man who is not persuaded by the gospel will never be persuaded by a ghost. Let no one wait, before accepting Jesus, for something extraordinary to happen.—*Morrison*.

570. "Just what is the value of the infidel argument from experience? I would point out that the use of the word 'violation'—in Hume's phrase, 'violation of the laws of nature'—is not the best word to use in defining a miracle. The matter is made very clear in the following quaint conversation. 'I regard a miracle,' said uncle, 'to be merely such an interference wi' the established coorse o' things as infallibly shows us the presence and action o' a supernatural power. What o'clock is it wi' you, sir, if you please?' 'It is half-past twelve, exactly, Greenwich time,' replied Smith. 'Well, sir,' said uncle, pulling a huge old timepiece from his pocket, 'it's one o'clock wi' me; I generally keep my watch a bit forrit. But I may hae a special reason noo for setting my watch by the railway, and so, see ye, I'm turning the hands o' 't round. Noo, wad ye say that I have violated the laws of a watch? True, I hae dune what watchdom, wi' a' its laws, couldna hae dune for itself; but I hae dune violence to nane o' its laws. My action is only the interference of a superior intelligence for a suitable end; but I hae violated nae law. Well, then, instead of the watch, say the universe; instead of moving the hands, say God acting worthily of Himself; and we hae a' that I contend for in a miracle: that is, the unquestionable presence of an almighty hand working the divine will. And if He sees fit to work miracles, what can hinder Him? He has dune it oftener than once or twice already; and wha daur say that He'll not get leave to do't again?'"

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571. "Miracles," says Fuller, "are the swaddling-clothes of the infant churches," and, says Trench, "we may add, not the garments of the full-grown. They were as the proclamation that the king was mounting the throne; who, however, is not proclaimed every day, but only at his accession. When he sits acknowledged on his throne, the proclamation ceases. They were as the bright clouds which gather round and announce the sun at his first appearing: his midday splendour, though as full, and fuller indeed, of light and heat, knows not those bright heralds and harbingers of his rising. Or they may be likened to the framework on which the arch is rounded, which framework is taken down as soon as that is completed."

572. Dr. Walter C. Smith, a popular Scotch poet-preacher, on one occasion tried to explain to an old lady the meaning of the Scriptural expression, "Take up thy bed and walk," by saying that the bed was simply a mat or rug, easily taken up and carried away. "Na, na," replied the lady, "I canna believe that. The bed was a regular four-poster. There would be no miracle walking away wi' a bit o' mat or rug on your back."

573. An organ is an instrument curiously framed or adjusted in its parts, and prepared to yield itself to any force which touches the keys. An animal runs backward and forth across the keyboard, and produces a jarring, disagreeable jumble of sounds. Thereupon he begins to reason, and convinces himself that it is the nature of the instrument to make such sounds, and no other. But a skilful player comes to the instrument, as a higher presence, endowed with a supernatural sense and skill. He strikes the keys, and all melodious and heavenly sounds roll out upon the enchanted air. Will the animal now go on to reason that this is impossible, incredible, because it violates the nature of the instrument, and is contrary to his own experience? But the player himself, and all that can think it possible for him to do what the animal cannot, will have no doubt that the music is made by the same laws that made the jargon. Just so Christ, to whose will or touch our mundane system is as pliant as to ours, may be able to execute results through its very laws subordinated to Him, which are impossible to us. Nay, it would be itself a contradiction of all order and fit relation if He

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could not. . . . Being a miracle Himself, it would be the greatest of all wonders if He did not work miracles.—*Bushnell*.

574. When God had some new tidings to tell to the world, which they could not have found out by their own sense and wit, He gave to the men whom He sent with the message the power of working miracles. The miracles were a sort of bell, which they rung in the ears of their generation, that people might listen to what they had to say, and believe that it came from Heaven. Thus when God sent Moses upon an errand to the Israelites that they might attend to what he said, God gave him the power of working all manner of wonders.—*Goulburn*.

MISSIONS

575. The missionary spirit is the spirit of the Bible. From the fall of man the great end of God's revelation of His will to man has been to bring wandering, rebellious man back to Himself. This great purpose became more and more apparent as the ages rolled by, until it burst all bounds in the great commission given to the apostles to go into all the world, to all nations, to every creature, and preach the glad news of the pardoning love of God as set forth in the gift of His Son to suffer and die for our redemption, that man might be reconciled to God in loving surrender to His will. The missionaries of the first century of the Christian era fully realised the missionising genius of the gospel of Christ; and with burning zeal for the salvation of men went forth and suffered and endured untold hardships in their efforts to bring the world to Christ. So great was the power they exerted and so mighty was the conquest they achieved that they were described as "the men who turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).

But this missionary spirit was smothered and paralyzed by worldly pride, ambitions, love of preferment and bitter controversy about petty things; such as priestly orders, relics, images, vestments and many other trifles. For sixteen hundred years the missionary spirit that characterised the first century was all but dead. But the nineteenth century was particularly noted for the revival of this missionary spirit; and to-day it is more widespread than ever before in the history of religion. Christian

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missions, with the invaluable aid afforded by the Bible societies, have penetrated into all parts of the world. The great commission is fast receiving its full requirements. The gospel is to be preached in all the world for a witness. God is gathering out of all nations a people for His name. The gospel meets with the same obstacles as at the first. Some "hear" and some "forbear" as they did then. The field is the world. Much precious seed is lost in rocky places, among thorns and on the wayside; but some take root and result in precious grain.

The four great features that were predicted to mark the gospel age are with us, in intensified degree; namely, the spread of the gospel, war, pestilence, and famine. (See Matt. 24: 6-14; Luke 21: 10-19; Rev. 6: 1-8.)

576. The world evangelised is a noble ambition; a single generation in which to accomplish it, the greatest task of the age; the world Christianised is the final consummation for which we dare to hope. Ask whether we are justified in supplanting the ethnic religions, and we answer that the religions of Plato, of Seneca, of Marcus Aurelius, and all the rest of like kind, have failed to elicit from the race its largest possibilities, while Christianity has to its credit multitudes of men from every quarter of the earth whose characters are living testimonies to its supremacy. Ask whether Christianity is equal to its task, and its own life is our answer. It has braved the dangers of a thousand battles; it has withstood the corroding influences of the ages, and the assurance of Jesus that "the gates of Hades would not prevail against it," comes to us with a new appreciation. "Crowned creature of eternity, it contains nothing in its essential life that can decay. It has the step of immortal vigour. On its thigh is the sword of universal conquest and dominion, and in its eyes, that look before and after, the light of divinity and the tender look of helpfulness and love."—*W. F. Rothenburger.*

577. "Talk about questions of the day," said William E. Gladstone, "there is but one question, and that is the gospel. It can and will correct everything that needs correction. My only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind into contact with divine revelation."

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578. If our religion is not true, we are bound to change it; if it is true, we are bound to propagate it.—*Whately*.

579. "In the early days of the foreign missionary movement, a preacher in America said he would not give one Illinois farm for ten thousand Chinese converts. Another preacher praised 'the happy ignorance of the untutored savage.' 'When an attempt was first made to introduce the gospel into India, one of the directors of the East India Company was heard to declare that he would rather see a band of devils in India than a band of missionaries.' In presenting a petition to Parliament, the East India Company said: 'The sending of missionaries to our eastern possessions is the maddest, most extravagant, most unwarrantable project ever proposed by a lunatic enthusiast.' A high official said to a missionary: 'The man who would go to India as a preacher is as mad as a man who would put a torch to a powder-magazine.' Sir Edwin Arnold, upon being asked what he thought of the prospect of India's conversion to Christ, said: 'You might as well try to sweeten the Atlantic by throwing cologne water upon it.' Think of the wonderful change of sentiment in our day! Many years ago, a young minister, in commencing labours with a church, preached upon Foreign Missions. At the close of the service one of the elders approached him, and in freezing tones remarked: 'Our former pastor used to protect us from such calls.' That elder should have done the honourable thing, and quitted, like his old pastor, providing he did not inflict his views upon some other church. A few years ago a president of a meeting held in South Australia said: 'If the evangelistic committee only understood their Bibles as well as I do, they would send no more missionaries to foreign lands. The heathen are a law unto themselves!' We should rejoice that, in our day, the great majority of preachers and professing Christians believe that world-wide evangelism should be our objective."

580. At the Centennial Convention of churches of Christ at Pittsburgh, in 1909, J. Campbell White, secretary of the Laymen's Movement, New York, told of a Chinese theological graduate who asked his bishop if he could make a request about the field. The bishop was surprised, but said: "Usually no

request is allowed, but we will let you make yours. What is it?" The graduate replied: "My father and mother were working in that particular district where the Boxers are; they threatened that, unless he would deny the Lord, they would cut him up; they did so, and cast the body into the stream. To the mother they said the same. She answered: 'You may cut out my tongue, but I will not deny my Lord.' They did so. The same threat and treatment were meted out to the little sister." The graduate said his request was that he should be sent to that very district, "just to show those people there is no hatred in my heart for them." "I am glad," said Mr. White, "to have a gospel that will do that for a Chinaman."

581. The picture of my boyhood was that of an Atlas holding the world on his shoulders, but the picture for boy and girl, for man and woman, for minister and missionary to-day, is Christ bearing the world upon His heart. The world with the Atlas shoulder under it we know is a myth, but the world with Christ's heart under it is the mightiest reality of the ages. —*C. A. Brown.*

582. J. H. Jowett has pictured the difference between superficial giving and giving from the heart. "Here is a man who can spare five dollars for the foreign field. He has no hesitation about the offering. Nay, he can even relegate the matter to a clerk, and on the recurring days the amount is paid with the regularity of the sunrise. It occasions him little or no thought. He is dealing with superfluities, with the mere salvage of the web, and the forceful riches of life remain untouched. But he has one son, the pride of his heart, the hope of his life. One day a strange fire is kindled in the lad's heart, and a strange light comes into his eyes, and the lad knows himself to be called of God to the foreign field. 'Father, I want to be a missionary.' The light fades out of the father's sky, and the hopes of a life tumble down like temples built in dreams. That is the experience which shatters. That is where existence ripens into life. The sovereign was given, and nothing with it. The lad was given, and a life went with it, and there were blood-marks all along the way. It is the things we cannot spare which make our offerings alive."

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583. A returned missionary was once asked: "How many missionaries have you on your station?" "Three thousand," was the reply. "I did not ask how many converts, but how many missionaries." "I quite understood you," said the returned missionary, "and again I reply, three thousand; for all our converts are missionaries." This reminds one of the great church of Christ mission station at Bolenge, on the Congo, Africa, in connection with the work of which every ten members support a missionary, so that awhile ago it was reported that the church of six hundred members supported sixty missionaries.

584. On August 17, 1909, it was my privilege to visit Jerry McAuley's mission, in Water Street, New York. Seldom have I been so thrilled as when, that night, I heard testimony after testimony from the lips of those who had been dragged by Satan to the borders of hell, but whose fetters had been snapped by the great Deliverer. It did one good to witness the strong band of Christian men and women who gladly assembled night after night to attempt to lead those "down and out" to Christ, and encourage those who were striving to live the new life. Men who had been guilty of well-nigh the whole catalogue of sins told how Christ had rescued them; would-be suicides spoke of the timely intervention by workers of the mission, and finding true life in Christ. One man rose and said that for him there was no hope; he had committed the unpardonable sin. "I am lost! lost! lost!" he shouted, and walked out into the dark night. Two or three men followed him, and we were informed at the close of meeting that they would follow him all night rather than permit him to go alone, and probably throw himself into the river. During the meeting I felt that we had witnessed no more encouraging work, and, when a general invitation was given, gladly arose and assured the workers that at any rate a few in far-away Australia would from this time on be praying for the continued success of the great mission which had held similar meetings, night after night, for thirty-seven years.

585. I remember what one of the volunteers in India said: "If a man is ill, and I run for a physician and reach the doctor too late, I am not to blame. But when I started to run, if I

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knew there was a horse ready to take me faster than my feet could carry me, and I deliberately ignored the horse and went on foot, and came too late, then I am to blame." And he said to us missionaries: "I fear that much of my work in India has been on foot instead of on horseback; has been in the energy of the flesh instead of in the power of the Holy Spirit."—*Robert P. Wilder.*

586. A certain millionaire did not approve of Foreign Missions. One Sunday at church, when the collection was being taken for these missions, the collector approached the millionaire and held out the collection-bag. The millionaire shook his head. "I never give to missions," he whispered. "Then, take something out of the bag, sir," whispered the collector; "the money is for the heathen."

587. "A leader of a city church once said: 'We don't want our church to go down into this missionary business.' There it is, in bold defiance of the whole teaching and example of Jesus Christ—*going down into this missionary business.*" We must either go up into the missionary business, or down to eternal despair.

NEUTRALITY

588. Not always, in the ordinary affairs of life, is it necessary to take sides. There are unimportant matters in connection with which neutrality is advisable. To take sides would promote disunion. Too often one meets with persons who will be heard on every question; to them, silence is always out of the question; they never dream of heeding the command to be "slow to speak." Consequently, they unnecessarily create a breach between themselves and others upon trivial questions that do not matter.

In questions of right or wrong, good or evil, neutrality is sinful. A Christian must take up arms against evil, or be counted upon the other side. Yet how often, in order to retain, if possible, everybody's good will, or that one's business may not be interfered with, do men choose to occupy a position of neutrality instead of openly opposing the wrong. It is imperative that Christians should take sides in matters of principle, and

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unflinchingly stand up for God and right and truth. Such a man loses nothing from man or God, in the long run.

589. Tell me not of neutrality; it is out of the question. Ah! here is a case of neutrality upon record in this book: "Curse ye Meroz!" Why? What had the people done to expose themselves to this bitter malediction? Had they taken up arms against Jehovah? No! Had they gone over to the enemy, and fought against the chosen people? No! What, then, had they done? *Nothing!* Their neutrality was their crime. "Because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."—*Dr. Newton.*

590. "We are either for or against the Christ. Some seem unable to see this. Perhaps an illustration will help them. Should you stop on a street of one of our large cities and stand long, gazing into the shop-windows, a policeman would tap you on the shoulder, and say, 'Move on.' If you asked him why, he would tell you that you were obstructing traffic. You tell him you are not interfering with any one, but he answers that, while you do not mean to do it, you are interfering with every one on the crowded thoroughfare. And so there are many men who, if they would move on to the Christ, would be followed by others; but, so long as they stand in the way, these, also, refuse to go forward."

591. Canon Newbolt, of St. Paul's, London, says: "Of all hopeless things, the attempt to be neutral is the most hopeless. The great Italian poet, that disdainful soul, brings to bear all his power of contempt on those whom he describes as despised both of heaven and hell—men who strove to be neutral, who lived without infamy and without praise, mingled with those neutral angels who were neither for God nor for his enemies, but were, as he said, for themselves." The world is always demanding of the Christian either alliance or open war. Men may attempt to mark off neutral territory between Christ and the world, but there is in fact none.—*F. C. Ottman.*

592. Pythagoras, being asked what he was, answered that if Hiero were ever at the Olympian games, he knew the manner—

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that some came to try their fortune for the prizes, and some came as merchants to utter their commodities, and some came to make good cheer and meet their friends, and some came to look on; and that he was one of them that came to look on. But men must know that, in this theatre of man's life, *it is reserved only for God and the angels to be lookers-on.*—Lord Bacon.

593.

God will have all or none: serve Him, or fall
Down before Baal, Bel, or Belial;
Either be hot or cold; God doth despise,
Abhor, and reject all neutralities.

—Herrick.

OBEDIENCE

594. Our Lord refuses to accept any substitutes for obedience. Mere profession or lip service is repugnant to Him. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

Men appear to think that the contemplation of God's will atones for disobedience: that the study of truth serves in place of treading the plain path of duty. Such cannot possess absolute assurance, for it is those who "willeth to do his will" that "shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God" or not. Obedience ensures knowledge of God and truth. He who does God's will feels the touch of his Father's hand, and the thrill of a new-found joy, for "if ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them" (John 13:17).

Absolute submission to divine authority is needed. A soldier who refuses to obey orders is disciplined, yet somehow men expect leniency who flout the authority of Heaven, and refuse to obey their God.

"To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. 15:22).

595. A soul sincerely obedient will not pick and choose what commands to obey, and what to reject, as hypocrites do. An obedient soul is like a crystal glass with a light in the midst, which shines forth through every part thereof. A man sincerely obedient lays such a charge upon his whole man, as Mary, the mother of Christ, did upon all the servants at the feast (John 2:5): "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." Eyes, ears,

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hands, heart, lips, legs, body, and soul, do you all seriously and affectionately observe whatever Jesus Christ says unto you, and do it.—*T. Brooks.*

596. Some will obey partially; obey some commandments, not others; like a plough which, when it comes to a stiff piece of earth, makes a baulk. But God, that spake all the words of the moral law, will have all obeyed.—*Watson.*

597. "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." Now, here can be no mistake. Nothing can be love to God which does not shape itself into obedience. We remember the anecdote of the Roman commander who forbade an engagement with the enemy, and the first transgressor against whose prohibition was his own son. He accepted the challenge of the leader of the other host, met, slew, spoiled him, and then in triumphant feeling carried the spoils to his father's tent. But the Roman father refused to recognise the instinct which prompted this as deserving of the name of love: disobedience contradicted it, and deserved death. Weak sentiment—what was it worth? So with God. Strong feelings, warm expressions, varied internal experience, co-existing with disobedience, God counts not as love. Here weak feeling may not usurp that sacred name.—*F. W. Robertson.*

598. F. C. Spurr, at a mission service, said: "If they were prepared to go the whole way with Christ, I believe there would be a way out of more than one difficulty at present confronting them." Thomas Adams had spoken of some clergymen who were like the sign-post on the road; they said, "Go this way to Christ," although they had never been that way themselves. A minister should rather be like the star of Bethlehem, which led the way to Christ.

599. An engine-driver received the following order, as he was driving his luggage train a long journey: "Switch that train into the river." He did so, jumping from the engine as he attended to the order. He didn't know the meaning of it, but simply obeyed. Two or three minutes after, the mail-train came thundering past. He had saved hundreds of souls by obedience.—*C. R. Scoville.*

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600. "A general commands, and the soldiers obey. 'God spake, and it was done: he commanded, and it stood fast.' To sun and moon and stars He speaks, and they gladly obey Him; the seas and lakes and rivers He commands, and they think not of rebellion; the raging winds and angry storms hear His voice, and there is a great calm. But man, His son, He commands, and entreats, but, alas! how often in vain. 'Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!' It is as if the man at the head of an army could get all to obey him except his son."

601. It is recorded of a certain great philosopher, that a friend who went to visit him met the philosopher's little daughter before he met the philosopher himself. Knowing that the father was such a deeply learned man, he thought that the little girl must have learned something very grave, something very deep, from such a father, and he said to her: "What is your father teaching you?" The little maid looked at him with her clear blue eyes, and just said: "Obedience." That was what the great and wise man taught his little girl, and I believe that to be the most important lesson for children to learn, "to be obedient." It is a lesson necessary for their happiness, for their safety, and, I think I may say, for their life.—*Wynne*.

602. "A circus came to town; and everybody knows how the music, and the grand tent and horses, set all the little boys going. Quarters of dollars and shillings are in great demand; and many a choice bit of money have the circus-riders carried away which was meant for better purpose. A little boy was seen looking around the premises with a great deal of curiosity. 'Halloa, Johnny,' said a man who knew him; 'going to the circus?' 'No, sir,' answered Johnny; 'father don't like 'em.' 'Oh, well; I'll give you the money to go, Johnny,' said the man. 'Father don't approve of them,' answered Johnny. 'Well, go for once, and I'll pay for you.' 'No, sir,' said Johnny; 'my father would give me money if he thought it were best; besides, I've got twenty-five cents in my strong box—twice enough to go.' 'I'd go, Johnny, for once; it is wonderful the way the horses do,' said the man. 'Your father needn't know it.' 'I shan't,'

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said the boy. 'Now, why?' asked the man. ''Cause,' said Johnny, twirling his bare toes in the sand, 'after I've been, I could not look my father right in the eye, and I can now.'"

603. "Travellers among the Alps tell us that they come to have a peculiar feeling, unlike any other, for the Alpine guide. Not a feeling of companionship, fellowship, or friendship alone, but a feeling of all three. This feeling, they say, is produced by their obedience to the guide's commands, and the men who have guided them through the Alps always seem to them different from other men. Our Guide once said: 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.' That is in Him. Simple obedience, then, will produce in us a feeling of confidence in Jesus Christ that all the religious zeal and fervour in the world could not produce without obedience. Obedience is the key that unlocks the door into the dwelling of the indwelling Christ."

604. "Herein is my Father glorified." A king is made glorious by the obedience of the subjects throughout his realm. He is honored in that way. The parent is honored by the child. How? Not by his running around the neighborhood and saying, "Oh, what a great man my father is!" or, "What a beautiful house my father has to live in!" For a child to do that would be ridiculous. We like to see a child manifest warmth and affection toward his parents; but publishing such things in the streets about one's parents is not glorifying those parents. If a child loves and honors his parents, he shows it by studiously fulfilling their known wishes. An affectionate and loving child does honor his parents in the eyes of all the neighborhood. The teacher is honored, not by what the pupil says, but by what he does. Find out what they want who are put over you, and do that; and then you honor them, and we honor, or, what is the same thing, we glorify God by fulfilling His known commands.
—*H. W. Beecher.*

OPTIMISM

605. To ensure victory in the struggle against evil forces, optimism must be our ally. No wonder so many fail in life's conflicts—they look for failure, and men usually get what they seek for. They see only the dark side of things and characters.

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When David the conqueror returned amid the plaudits of the people, Saul was displeased, and "eyed David from *that* day and forward." From *that* day he eyed David with suspicion. He looked askance upon him. That became Saul's way—to eye David.

The Sauls are not all defunct. They are always with us. They look for trouble; eye everybody suspiciously; never feel quite sure of people's good motives in doing good, or being good. When they see an energetic worker, they remark: "How very forward!" When they come in contact with a courteous, kindly, tolerant business man, they say: "It is only policy, you know!" When they hear of a liberal gift, they declare: "He only does it for what he will get out of it!" Such folks see nothing good in life, but never fail to detect the black cloud looming up from the horizon.

Better far is it to be optimistic than pessimistic; to see the best in men; to shake off the melancholy spirit, and believe in the recoverableness of the vilest soul. People of this world need good cheer, not censure; they require to be lifted up, not depressed.

Sir E. W. Hamilton says of the late W. E. Gladstone: "He was like a barometer—the more you pressed him, the higher he rose. He could always see a rift in the clouds; he could always detect in the most depressing outlook some cause for comfort; he could always spy in the densest fog land ahead. With him bad news was always exaggerated. He declined to believe that anything which he considered a great calamity would happen till it actually occurred. . . . It was owing to this temperament that no untoward circumstances, no tragic event, no temporary rebuff or failure, disconcerted him. He hardly knew what despondency was. He had the hopefulness and cheerfulness which are usually associated with the fervour of youth."

"Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of faith!
She reels not in the storm of warring words,
She sees the best that glimmers thro' the worst,
She feels the sun is hid but for the night,
She spies the summer thro' the winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom fails,
She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wailed 'Mirage.'"

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606. Of Browning it has been said: "He is a sensible, joyous, healthy-minded man. He has studied human nature deeply, yet he has not lost heart or hope. He is no pessimist; he believes there is good somewhere in every human creature. . . . He can appreciate one's wants and weaknesses. His writings do us good; they are buoyant and cheery; they put life and energy into those who are beginning to despair of mankind. . . . He was one

Who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to awake.

607. Mr. A. T. Pierson, upon being asked if he was a pessimist or an optimist, said that he didn't know, but was sure he was a truist.—*F. M. Ludbrook.*

608. "Mr. Chesterton, in one of his essays, has quoted from the blunder of a schoolgirl what is perhaps the best definition of the terms 'optimist' and 'pessimist': 'An optimist,' said the girl, 'is a man who takes care of the eyes, and a pessimist is a man who takes care of the feet.' Exactly. The pessimist is concerned with the obstacles in the path about our feet, the optimist has eyes to see the plan of the journey and the goal at its end. The pessimist may have anxious prudence; the optimist has vision."

609. In one of his mission meetings, Mr. J. Wilbur Chapman held up before his audience a sheet of white paper, with a little black spot upon it, and asked, "What do you see?" Then he answered, "A black spot," and said, "Why don't you see the white?"

610. "Benjamin Franklin, editor of the *American Christian Review*, said: 'The sentence which has most influenced my life is, "Some persons grumble because God placed thorns among roses; why not thank God because He placed roses among thorns?" I first read it when but a mere lad. Since that day it has occupied a front room in my life, and has given it an optimistic trend.'"

611. "The secret of a bright life is to have brightness in the heart. The explanation of much of our pessimism is a poor, darkened heart. Some one has expressed this in a fable: 'A cold firebrand and a burning lamp started out one day to see what they could find. The firebrand came back and wrote in its journal that the whole world was dark. It did not find a place, wherever it went, in which there was light. Everywhere there was darkness. The lamp, when it was back, wrote in its journal, "Wherever I went it was light." What was the difference between the firebrand and the lamp? The lamp carried light with it, and when it went abroad it illumined everything about it. The dead firebrand carried no light, and it found none where it went.'"

612. At a prayer-and-praise meeting a good brother had indulged in a long, complaining strain of experiences about the trials and difficulties in the way to heaven. Another, of a very different spirit, followed, who said: "I see that our brother who has just sat down lives in Grumbling Street. I lived there myself for some time, and never enjoyed good health. The air is bad, the houses bad, the water bad; the birds never came and sang in the street, and I was gloomy and sad enough. But I flitted. I got into Thanksgiving Street, and ever since then I have had good health, and so have my family. The air is pure, the water good, the houses good; the sun shines in all day; the birds are always singing, and I am as happy as I can be. Now, I commend our brother to 'flit.' There are plenty of houses to let in Thanksgiving Street."—*Christian Intelligencer*.

613. "A man met a little fellow on the road carrying a basket of blackberries, and said to him, 'Sammy, where did you get such nice berries?' 'Over there, sir, in the briars!' 'Won't your mother be glad to see you come home with a basket of such nice, ripe fruit?' 'Ye', sir,' said Sammy; 'she always seems glad when I hold up the berries, and I don't tell her anything about the briars in my feet.' The man rode on. Sammy's remark had given him a lesson, and he resolved that henceforth he would try and hold up the berries and say nothing about the briars."

614. "That deep-lunged, red-blooded preacher, Sydney Smith, used to throw open the shutters to the morning sun, saying, 'Let us glorify the room.' Both conscience and temperament led him, also, to insist on flooding the dark places of the moral world with cheerfulness, which is the sunshine of the spirit. It was obvious, he thought, that the larger part of our worries and perplexities came from the anticipation of evils."

PEACE

615. Peace is the result of victory. It is said that, in ancient battles, the contesting armies would each choose a representative to engage in single combat; the army upon whose side was the successful combatant would look upon that as a signal of victory—the army upon whose side was the unsuccessful combatant would look upon that as a signal of defeat. The two great representatives, Christ and Satan, have met in single combat; they fought in the wilderness, upon the temple top, upon the mountain, upon hill Calvary, and Christ has vanquished the arch-enemy, a sure sign that we, His followers, shall also have the victory. "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1).

Throughout the Christian life, a condition of peace is maintained only by a continuous victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. To be victorious in life's conflicts, there must be entire subordination to our great Leader. "Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119:165).

To such, Christ bequeaths His own peace. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (John 14:17). It is a peace, said our Lord, unlike that which the world bestoweth. It is of a much higher kind: a peace which is peculiar to Christ, uninfluenced by the adverse forces of the world; a peace "which passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4:7).

The possession of such peace does not render us immune from conflict, but it gives us calmness of soul amid the fiercest strife, guards our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus, and imparts the utmost assurance of ultimate victory.

At the day of judgment, there shall be for the wicked no peace, because they have had no victory over sin. They may

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cry "Peace, peace: when there is no peace," for "sudden destruction cometh upon them." But for the righteous, there shall be nothing to mar their tranquility of spirit, for their peace shall be perfected;

"It is enough; earth's struggles soon shall cease,
And Jesus call us to heaven's perfect peace."

616. To be at peace with man, we must be at peace with ourselves. To be at peace with ourselves, we must be at peace with God.—*Monsell*.

617. "'Blessed' is promised to the peacemaker, not to the conqueror."

618. In a gallery was exhibited a beautiful picture of Christ. A man stood for awhile gazing upon the picture, and by and by said, "Oh, how I love Him." A gentleman at his side said, "I love Him too." Then others expressed agreement. They were one in the presence of Christ. So should it be with all mankind. The vision of Christ should bring peace on earth, and good will toward men.

619. One morning, on awakening, a woman charged with the care of a home began thinking of the day's simple duties. And as she thought they seemed to magnify and pile up. There was her little daughter to get off to school with her luncheon. Some of the church ladies were coming that morning for a society meeting, and she had been planning a dainty luncheon for them. The maid in the kitchen was not exactly ideal—yet. And as she thought into the day her hand began aching. After breakfast, as her husband was leaving for the day's business, he took her hand and kissed her good-by. "Why," he said, "my dear, your hand is feverish. I'm afraid you've been doing too much. Better just take a day off," and he was gone. And she said to herself: "A day off! The idea! Just like a *man* to think that I could take a day off." But she had been making a habit of getting a little time for reading and prayer after breakfast. Pity she had not put it in earlier, at the day's very outset. Yet maybe she could not. Sometimes it is not possible. Yet *most times* it is possible, by planning. Now she slipped to her room,

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and, sitting down quietly, turned to the chapter in her regular place of reading. It was the eighth of Matthew. As she read she came to the words: "*And he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she arose, and ministered unto him.*" And she knelt and breathed out the soft prayer for a touch of the Master's hand upon her own. And it came as she remained there for a few moments. And then, with much quieter spirit, she went on into the day. The luncheon for the church ladies was not quite so elaborate as she had planned. There came to her an impulse to tell her morning's experience. She shrank from doing it. It seemed a sacred thing. They might not understand. But the impulse remained and she obeyed it, and quietly told them. And as they listened there seemed to come a touch of the Spirit's presence upon them all. And so the day was a blessed one. Its close found her husband back again. And as he greeted her he said quietly: "My dear, you did as I said, didn't you? The fever's gone."—*S. D. Gordon.*

620. "There is a perfect calm at the centre of every cyclone; above it there is a patch of blue sky, which is called by the sailors 'the eye of the storm.' So there is a heavenly calm at the centre of all the storms of life, and a serene, bright sky above it, which is the eye of the divine Father. Those who trust in Him are kept in perfect peace."

621. I have spilled the ink over a bill and so have blotted it till it can hardly be read, but this is quite another thing from having the debt blotted out, for that cannot be till payment is made. So a man may blot his sins from his memory, and quiet his mind with false hopes, but the peace which this will bring him is widely different from that which arises from God's forgiveness of sin through the satisfaction which Jesus made in His atonement. Our blotting is one thing, God's blotting out is something far higher.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

622. Sometimes worry is carrying a load that one should not carry at all. I think it was Lyman Beecher who said that he got along very comfortably after he gave up running the universe. Some good, earnest people are greatly concerned about the way things in the world are going. I'm obliged to confess to some

very serious blunders there. It seemed to me that there was so much to be done, so many people needing help, so much of wrong and sin to fight, that I must be ever pushing and never sleeping. I had to sleep, of course; but all my burden, which meant the burden of the world's need as I saw it, was lugged faithfully to bed every night. There was a lot of pillow-planning. But I found that the wrinkles grew thick, and the physical strength gave out, and yet at the end of vigorous campaigning there *seemed* about as much left to do as ever. Then one day my tired eyes lit upon that wondrous phrase, "The Lord of the harvest." It caught fire in my heart at once. Oh! there is a *Lord* of the harvest. I had been forgetting that. He is a Lord, a masterful one. He has the whole campaign mapped out, and each one's part in helping mapped out too. And I let the responsibility of the campaign lie over where it belonged. When night-time came I went to bed to sleep. My pillow was this, "There is a *Lord* of the harvest."—*S. D. Gordon.*

PERSECUTION

623. Whenever genuine religion has made itself felt, the persecuting spirit has also been busy. To persecute those who differ in views or conduct is unjust and iniquitous, contrary alike to reason and revelation, as well as being extremely bad policy. No man has any right to be his brother's judge, yet in every age a countless host of persecutors have arisen who arrogate to themselves this right, and, as a consequence, in certain instances, seas of blood have been caused to flow, and in others, what is perhaps far worse, faithful disciples of Christ have been called upon to suffer the bitter sneer, the sarcastic gibe, the sinister laugh, or some secret mean act or public libel, all of which are but part of the devilish programme of persecutors. "Where persecution begins, Christianity ends."

When persecuted, how should we act? Christ's example and precept supply the answer. Our Lord could have called more than twelve legions of angels to His help, but He did not (Matt. 26: 53). He "was reviled, and reviled not again; suffered, and threatened not" (1 Pet. 2: 23). He said: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you" (Matt. 5: 44). Christians must, like the early martyrs, be heroic in suffering, calm

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in spirit amid storms of opposition, proving to their torturers and all others that they still stand resolute, and believe that though the body be bruised or even destroyed, or the mind harassed, He who numbers the hairs of our head shall protect the soul.

Christians should never persecute others. They must be tolerant even to those who extend to them no toleration. Abuse never comes within the range of Christian duty. It never bridges the breach, but always widens it. "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them" (Matt. 7:12). By patiently bearing whatever blows are inflicted, and refusing to use the enemies' weapons, a great victory is achieved, for men thus tread in the footsteps of their Master. "If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye" (1 Pet. 4:14).

624. Yes, you never burned a human being alive, you never clapped your hands as the death-shriek proclaimed that the lion's fang had gone home into the most vital part of the victim's frame. But did you never rob him of his friends? gravely shake your head and oracularly insinuate that he was leading souls to hell? chill the affections of his family? take from him his good name? . . . Did you never find a malicious pleasure in repeating all the miserable gossip with which religious slander fastened upon his daily acts, his words, and even his uncommunicated thoughts?—*F. W. Robertson.*

625. There is a persecution sharper than that of the axe. There is an iron that goes into the heart deeper than the knife. Cruel sneers, and sarcasms, and pitiless judgments, and cold-hearted calumnies, these are persecution. Did you ever pour bitterness into a heart that God was bruising, by a cold laugh, or a sneer, or a galling suspicion—into a sister's heart, or a friend's, or even a stranger's? Remember when you sent them, as Job's friends sent him, to pour out their griefs alone before their Father, your name went up to the avenger's ears mingled with the cries of His own elect.—*F. W. Robertson.*

626. Christ never used anything that looked like force or violence except once, and that was to drive bad men out of the temple, and not to drive them in.—*Dr. Jortin.*

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627. Silence is the best answer to slander.

628. A Russian disciple, says Mr. Alex. Gordon, spoke at the Baptist Convention of 1914, in Philadelphia, U. S. A. He was imprisoned for preaching the gospel, but later on a paper was put in his hands to sign; he could go free if he agreed to give up preaching. He took the paper, and tore it into shreds, saying: "I would rather rot in prison than agree to be silent."

629. "Pandit Masih Prakash, a converted Brahmin, said, while addressing a crowd in India: 'You may say sometimes that only low-caste men become Christians, and that they do so for a piece of bread to fill their empty stomachs and a dhoti to cover their naked loins. This is a vile lie. . . . Look at me; am I a low caste? I am a Brahmin.' . . . 'You a Brahmin!' says a Brahmin in the crowd, with a lofty look of scornful disdain. 'Don't you know a Brahmin when you see him?' says Masih Prakash; 'does a change of heart and a regenerate life, through faith in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, so alter my rup [external configuration] that you fail to recognise my high Brahmin caste and priestly descent? Are you blind, my brother? What has happened to you?' 'Of what Brahmin order are you?' 'Of a high order—a Tewari.' 'You a Tewari! and you turned a Christian?' It is too much for the Brahmin. He turns on his heels, and, as a parting shot, hurls this curse at him: 'You are cursed! May you be born a dog in your next birth into this world, and eat the leavings of the lowest of the low caste.' Masih Prakash is equal to the occasion. With a smiling face and his dark eyes flashing, he replied: "'He that believeth on me," says Christ, "shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven."'"

630. Travellers tell us that they that are on the top of the Alps may see great showers of rain fall under them, which they overlook, but not one drop of it comes at them. And he that is on the top of some high tower mindeth not the croaking of frogs and toads, the hissing of serpents, adders, and the like

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venomous creatures that are below. Thus, a heaven-minded man, who dwells in heaven on earth, looks through and beyond all troubles and afflictions, rides triumphantly through the storm of disparagements—nay, he boldly stares death in the face, though never so ugly disguised. As Anaxarchus said to the tyrant, "*Tunde, tunde, Anaxarchum non tundis*"—beat him and bruise him and kill him it may, but he will keep up his soul in the very ruins of his body.—*Spencer*.

631. "Something more than fifty years ago," says H. P. Liddon, "at a small dinner party, the ladies withdrew, and, under the guidance of one member of the company, the conversation took a turn of which it will be enough here and now to say that it was utterly dishonorable to Jesus Christ our Lord. One of the guests said nothing, but presently asked the host's permission to ring the bell, and when the servant appeared, he ordered his carriage. He then, with the courtesy of perfect self-command, expressed his regret at being obliged to retire, but explained that he was still a Christian. Mark the phrase, for it made a deep impression at the time—'still a Christian.' Perhaps it occurs to you that the guest who was capable of this act of simple courage was a minister of the gospel. Let me assure you that such was not the case. The party was made up entirely of laymen, and the guest in question became the great prime minister of the early days of the reign of Queen Victoria—he was the late Sir Robert Peel."

632. Did you ever hear of Magor-missabib? No? He was the same as Pashur. "And who was Pashur?" The innocent ignorance implied in that question tells the whole story of the relation of persecutors and the persecuted. Pashur was a great man in his day, "chief governor in the house of Jehovah." There was an earnest, brave man named Jeremiah, who spoke words of great truth very courageously, and they were bitter words to an evil people and priesthood. So Pashur thrashed him and put him in the stocks. But Pashur was carried to Babylon a slave, and there would be no memory of his name on earth at this day but for the fact that Jeremiah pilloried him in a book which the world will never let die.—*Deems*.

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633. To illustrate the doctrine of God's special care of His children, C. H. Spurgeon tells the story of John Knox, who, one evening, refused to sit in his usual seat, though he did not know any particular reason for so acting. No one was allowed to occupy that chair, and during the evening a shot came in through the window, and struck a candlestick that stood immediately opposite where John Knox would have been sitting if he had taken his accustomed place.

634. "Methinks they are casting roses before me," said one of the Scottish martyrs as they were piling up the fagots to burn him.—*Peloubet*.

635. A godly minister, escaping from his persecutors, went into a hay-loft, and hid himself in the hay. The soldiers went into the place, pricking and thrusting with their swords and bayonets, and the good man even felt the cold steel touch the sole of his foot, and the scratch which was made remained for years; yet his enemies did not discover him. Afterwards, a hen came and laid an egg every day hard by the place where he was hidden, and so he was sustained as well as preserved until it was safe for him to leave his hiding-place.—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

PERSEVERANCE

636. It is said that a leopard does not chase its prey as other animals, but pursues it by leaping; if with three or four jumps it cannot capture its prey, it gives up the chase in indignation. There are many who, at the start of the Christian life, go forth with leaps and bounds, but if they fail to vanquish the enemy in a little while, they give up the chase in despair.

Such as these start too quickly to hold out. They are like the seed of the parable in stony ground, which sprang up too rapidly, and withered away as quickly as it grew. They resemble a comet that blazes out in the heavens for a moment, and then smoulders down into complete invisibility. They are like the severely spurred horse, free and fiery at first, but after awhile jaded and exhausted.

Christ says that "he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22). The lamp of grace is useless unless

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it burns to the end of the journey. The ladder of profession is of no avail unless it reaches heaven. The soul makes shipwreck unless the haven be reached. The race is not won till the last step is taken.

Bernard called perseverance the only daughter of the highest king, the perfection of virtues, the storehouse of good works, a virtue without which no man shall see God.

637. In the heathery turf you will often find a plant chiefly remarkable for its peculiar roots; from the main stem down to the minutest fibre, you will find them all abruptly terminate, as if shorn or bitten off, and the quaint superstition of the country people alleges that once on a time it was a plant of singular potency for healing all sorts of maladies, and therefore the great enemy of man in his malignity bit off the roots, in which its virtues resided. The plant, with its odd history, is a very good emblem of many well-meaning but little-effecting people. . . . The efficacy of every good work lies in its completion, and all their good works terminate abruptly, and are left off unfinished. The devil frustrates their efficacy by cutting off their ends, their unprofitable history is made up of plans and projects, schemes of usefulness that were never gone about, and magnificent undertakings that were never carried forward; societies that were set going, then left to shift for themselves, and forlorn beings who for a time were taken up and instructed, and just when they were beginning to show symptoms of improvement were cast on the world again.—*James Hamilton*.

638. In a cycle journey which I took recently from Oxford to London, I found the latter half of the journey far more trying than the earlier part. The earlier part of the road was full of changes, now climbing, now descending; the latter part was one long, dead, monotonous level. Along the monotonous level I missed the freshening breeze, the expansive outlook, the rest which is born of change. The limbs were apt to tire, the same muscles being unceasingly exercised. The uneven road brought more muscles into play, or changed the posture of the limbs, and out of the variety there came strength. Life which has to trudge along the dead level is in fearful peril of exhaustion. "Because they have no changes, they fear not God."

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When my difficulty faces me daily through many years, or when my pain becomes chronic, or when my anxiety respecting the prodigal child is perpetuated through half my life, I need the presence of rich and most nutritious resources. It is in these dead moments that Christ reveals the glory of His power. He can bring blessing into the drudgery, and the long, long lane, which seems to have never a turning, may become the very "highway of the Lord."—*J. H. Jowett.*

639. "The other day I saw a man attempting to split a rock with a sledge-hammer. Down came the sledge upon the stone as if it would crush it, but it merely rebounded, leaving the rock as sound as before. Again the ponderous hammer was swung, and again it came down, but with the same result. Nothing was accomplished. The rock was still without a crack. I might have asked what good would result from such a waste of time and strength. But that man had faith. He believed in the power of that sledge. He believed that repeated blows had a tendency to split that rock. And so he kept at it. Blow after blow came down, all apparently in vain. But still he kept on without a thought of discouragement. He believed that a vigorously swung sledge 'had great power.' And at last came one more blow and the work was done."

640. A poor woman had a supply of coal laid at her door by a charitable neighbour. A very little girl came out with a small fire-shovel, and began to take up a shovelful at a time, and carry it to a sort of bin in the cellar. I said to the child, "Do you expect to get all that coal in with that little shovel?" She was quite confused at my question, but her answer was very striking. "Yes, sir, if I *work long enough.*" Humble worker, make up for your want of ability by abundant continuance in well-doing, and your life-work will not be trivial. The repetition of small efforts will effect more than the occasional use of great talents.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

641. I shall never forget an incident that occurred many years ago, and that impressed my childish feeling, of one who was turned out from an unfeeling husband's house. It was on a bitter cold winter's night; and she wandered toward her father's

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house, almost naked, and with shoeless feet. After wading through the snow till she was benumbed and exhausted, she sank down and died, and her stiff and marble-like form was found so near her home that if there had been a light burning in the window she could have seen it. There, right before the dooryard, where often she had plucked flowers in her girlhood, she gave over and perished. I think with many persons it is just so. They wander through the black and terrible wilderness of sin till they almost see their Father's house, and then their strength is spent, and they die within a few steps of home. If it is worth your while to be good, it is worth your while to be so good that your goodness shall take hold on everlasting life.—*H. W. Beecher.*

642. "Once Paganini, standing before a vast audience, broke string after string of his violin. Men had come to hear his greatest sonata, 'Napoleon.' They hissed as he seemed to destroy all hope of continuing the performance. Then the artist held up his violin; 'One string—and Paganini,' and on that one string he made the first complete manifestation of his greatness. Are you disheartened because so little of your life is left to you? Are you discouraged because there is no strength, no ability, you can call your own? Are you dejected because you have no resources? Persevere, remembering what this may mean: *One hour, one talent—and God!*"

643. Plutarch said of the Roman consul Coriolanus: "He was always trying to excel himself." The same secret of excellence is possessed by the sculptor St. Gaudens. A Chicago reporter said to him, when a piece of his work was unveiled in that city, "I suppose, Mr. St. Gaudens, you consider this statue your masterpiece?" "Indeed, I do not," was the quick reply: "my next statue is always my masterpiece."

PRAYER

644. Christ and His apostles, by example and precept, not only taught the necessity of prayer, but that it should be given its rightful place as the greatest and most effective thing which human power can do. Our divine Master let nothing interfere

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with the quiet hour. The early disciples continued in prayer, secretly and publicly pleading for omnipotent help. Prayer should be considered the highest exercise in which we can engage, and the greatest privilege. Nothing else can be done to atone for the lack of prayer.

When we pray, two things should be kept in mind:

1. The need of faith. Prayers offered minus faith are spoken into the air. They mean nothing, and bring nothing. It is simply a matter of saying prayers—not praying. If the creature prays to the Creator in faith, the answer will come. The faith of many is so small, that should their prayers be answered, none would be more surprised than they.

2. The limitation of prayer. Every prayer is answered, but not always in the way the petitioner wishes. "They that seek the Lord shall not want any *good* thing" (Ps. 34:10). No evil, however much desired, will be given. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures" (Jas. 4:3). We should pray so much that our wishes become merged into the will of God.

Let these conditions be observed, and greater achievements shall be wrought through prayer than ever were dreamed of.

645. The greatest of all things we can do is to pray. Jesus lived a life of prayer. All that He did and said grew out of His prayer. There is no way of knowing exactly how far it was so. But the more I study His life, the stronger grows the impression that His teaching and activity, which form the greater part of these Gospel pages, were actually less than His praying. He seems to have put prayer first. All the rest was an outgrowth of it. He was on a world-winning errand. And this was what He thought of prayer. The emphasis of Jesus' personal habit was laid upon prayer. . . . The greatest thing each one of us can do is to pray. If we can go personally to some distant land, still we have gone to only one place. But our field is the world. It is impossible for us to reach our whole field personally. But it can be reached, and reached effectually, by prayer. The place where you and I are sent, whether at home or abroad, is simply our base of action. It is our field for personal touch. And that means very much. But it is more than that. It is only a small part of our field of activity. It is more significant as

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our base of action, from which we send out our messengers of prayer to all parts of the field.—*S. D. Gordon.*

646. "A little girl once said to her father: 'Papa, I want you to say something to God—something I want to tell Him very much. I have such a little voice that I don't think He could hear me, but you have a strong, loud voice, and He will be sure to hear you.' The father told his little one that if need be God would stop the sweetest music of the angels and say: 'Hush! stop the singing for a little while. There's a little girl away down on earth who wants to whisper something in my ear.'"

647. "The early Christians in Africa were earnest and regular in devotions, and each had a separate spot in the bush to which he went to pray. The paths to these Bethels became distinctly marked, and when any began to decline in the prayer habit it was soon manifest to his fellows, who would remind him of his duty by saying, 'Broder, de grass grow on your path yonder.'"

648. A little girl who suffered greatly through thunder-storms was told by her mother to pray when alarmed. One day, at the close of a fearful storm, she came to her mother with the information that praying during the danger brought her no relief. "Then," said her mother, "try praying when the sun shines, and see if that will take away fear." The child did so, and when another storm was raging she sweetly said, "Praying while the sun shines is the best way, for I am not the least bit afraid now." How often do we stay away from our Master until the storms of life drive us to Him for shelter and protection.—*M. C. Wiley.*

649. Major-General O. O. Howard was once stationed on the Pacific Coast, and some friends of his wanted to honor him by having a reception. They decided to have it on Wednesday night. It was to be a great affair, and the President had given it his sanction. Then some one said, "We had better let him know, so that he will be ready on Wednesday evening," and so they went and told him: "General, Wednesday night we want to see you on a matter of business." "Well, gentlemen, you cannot see me on that night; I have a previous engagement." Finally

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they said, "It is a reception, and the President of the United States has given it his sanction." And the old veteran, his eyes flashing, stood up and said: "You know I am a church-member, and I promised the Lord when I united with His church that every Wednesday night I would meet Him in the prayer-meeting, and there is nothing in the world that would make me break my engagement." They had the reception, but they had it on a Thursday evening. When I was out there, I asked, "Where is the man who has the greatest influence?" and they said, "It is not a minister of the gospel; it is Major-General Howard."—*J. Wilbur Chapman.*

650. S. J. Corey writes: "I saw a little girl come out of a house the other day, bitterly crying. Her mother had denied her a request, and she was wailing, 'I want a doll-carriage! I want a doll-carriage!' As she walked down the sidewalk, her petition grew more and more indistinct; and, as she turned and walked beside me, it was only the half-hearted cry, 'I want—I want!' Finally, as I faced her, it had shortened into a bewildered 'I—I!' I looked into her little, tear-stained face, and asked, 'What is it you want, my little girl?' She gazed at me blankly for a moment, and then, rubbing her little, dirty fist against an eye, she smiled shamefacedly, and replied, 'I—don't—know!' How like the little one we are in our petitions to our heavenly Father!"

651. "Coming home from the meeting, Willie said, 'Papa, they hadn't learnt to pray very well in Bible times, had they?' 'I suppose,' said the father, 'they could pray as well then as now.' 'No, they couldn't,' replied Willie; 'the Lord's Prayer is only a minute long, and our minister can pray for a quarter of an hour.'"

652. The following is from "Newman Hall's Autobiography": "21st May, 1887.—Visit to Spurgeon, and referred to the great speech, an hour long, the week before in Exeter Hall. 'How long did it take you to prepare it?' S.—'I could do nothing that morning—bothered by a caller. Only time to select three or four anecdotes from scrapbook, which on my way I threaded together. A deacon said afterwards, "You did well, and felt

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happy; I knew you would. I was up early, and from five to seven was urgent in prayer that God would give you a message." That deacon hunts for souls as dogs for the hare. He accosted a prostitute one evening—raining—knocked at a door and asked shelter—mistress listened while he spoke to the girl and prayed. Both are now members of the Tabernacle.'"

653. "A preacher used up nearly all the time at the prayer-meeting with his own prayers and addresses. He wondered why the members of the church took no part. One evening he prayed lengthily and spoke for forty minutes on the healing of the ten lepers, and of the one who returned to give glory to God, and asked why the nine did not do so. One of the deacons replied that he thought it was quite likely the first one took up all the time."

654. G. A. Storey, in "Sketches from Memory," writes: "There is a good deal of superstition among the Spanish gamblers, some even going so far as to think the Almighty takes an interest in the play of those who call in His assistance. I remember one elderly gentleman, of a staid and serious countenance, who used always, on entering the card-room, to go up to a corner and say a short prayer in his hat before he risked his duros and his gold onzas."

655. A story is told of a minister who, conscious of his failure in his work, was praying with terrific fervor in his pulpit one morning for power. "Lord, send us power; Lord, give us a Pentecost; oh, send us the power, Lord;" and so on and so forth. Down in the congregation was one who had fought many a battle for his Master, and who knew something of the secret of success. In the midst of the minister's fervid appeals he called out, "Nah, Lord, it be ideas he want; Lord, give him ideas."—*J. E. Burns.*

656. "There is no sense in always telegraphing to heaven for God to send a cargo of blessing, unless we are at the wharf to unload the vessel when it comes."

"The Christian on his knees sees more than the philosopher on tiptoe."

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"'Thy will be done' is the keynote to which every prayer must be turned."

"Prayer is the slender nerve that moveth the muscles of Omnipotence."

Talmage suggested that many public prayers would be better and more helpful if we cut a bit off from each end and set fire to the middle.

657. What labour cannot do, prayer will; and these two are not the same thing, in spite of the old saying that to labour is to pray. "Whither art thou going?" asked the Roman Emperor Valens of a trusted Christian nobleman who had worked long and hard, but in vain, to serve the state for him. "Out to the desert, sire," he answered, "to pray for your empire."—*Huntington*.

658. "A gentleman while buying a paper from a newsboy said to him, 'Well, my boy, do you ever find it hard work to be good?' 'Yes, sir,' said the little fellow. 'Well, so do I. But I have found out how to get help.' 'How, sir?' 'I just send a telegram.' The boy looked surprised. The gentleman touched the boy's forehead and said, 'What do you do in there?' 'Think,' said the boy. 'Can God see what you think?' 'Yes.' 'Well,' said the gentleman, 'when you want help to sell your papers or to be a good boy, just send a sky telegram, "Jesus, help me;" and God will see and hear.'

659. Stonewall Jackson, having once used the expression "instant in prayer," was asked what was his idea of its meaning. "I will give you," he said, "my idea of it by illustration, if you will allow it, and will not think that I am setting myself up as a model for others." On being assured that there would be no misjudgment, he went on to say: "I have so fixed the habit in my own mind, that I never raise a glass of water to my lips without a moment's asking of God's blessing. I never seal a letter without putting a word of prayer under the seal. I never take a letter from the post without a brief sending of my thoughts heavenward. I never change my classes in the section-room without a minute's petition on the cadets who go out and those who come in." "And don't you sometimes forget this?"

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"I think I can say that I scarcely do; the habit has become almost as fixed as breathing."

660. One requisite of true prayer is that we are willing to co-operate with God in answering our request. A man used to pray fervently for the poor in his neighbourhood, but never gave them of his substance. After the usual prayer one morning, his child said, "Father, I wish I had your corn-crib!" "Why, my son?" replied the father. "Why, because then I would answer your prayer myself."

661. Some time ago, our newspaper contained the following soldier-lad's letter: "Although I want to serve my king and country, if possible, I serve the King of kings first. I think that through this I may perhaps emerge stronger for having gone through the many temptations that beset me up here. There are seventy-five of us in one room, and I shall not forget the first night in a hurry. As I looked round and heard the cursing and swearing going on, I thought that I should never have the courage to get down and pray. But I was, by the grace of God, enabled to do so, and I have done so each night since, but have to stop my ears to keep out the sounds. I want your very earnest prayers, for you know how easy it is to fall. I want to shun the very appearance of evil, that I may show these fellows that Christ does not stand for a name only, but that at all times He enables us to conquer by His grace."

662. A. T. Pierson tells of two families at enmity in a church. After trying various plans in vain, the church was advised to give itself over to prayer—exclusively. In three months both families had left the district.

663. William Dawson once told this story, says D. L. Moody: At a revival meeting a little lad, who was used to Methodist ways, went home to his mother and said, "Mother, John So-and-so is under conviction and seeking for peace; but he will not find it to-night, mother." "Why, William?" "Because he is only down on one knee, mother, and he will never get peace until he's down on both knees." From this we can at any rate

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learn that until consciousness of sin brings us down on both knees and we are completely humbled, we cannot receive many blessings which God is willing to bestow upon us.

PREACHING

664. "It was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). There can be no improvement upon the divinely appointed means of saving the world, nor any adequate substitute for the gospel in essays upon morality, lectures upon current topics, etc.

The preacher's main theme should be the gospel, which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). He is a messenger of joyful tidings.

It should be remembered, whilst the terrors of God's law must have their place in preaching, that people are more easily won by the presentation of God's mercies than His judgments. Let a preacher only administer thundering anathemas, and he will soon find that most of his hearers are conspicuous for their absence. People will not come to be lashed like slaves, but appreciate being treated as intelligent, reasonable men.

It needs also to be kept in mind that preaching which appeals simply to the emotions is not likely to be conducive of lasting good. Mr. Bunyan depicts a character whom he calls Mr. Wet-eyes, who was not unlike preachers who are excessively sensational, at the expense of sound reasoning and whole Scriptural truth. Based upon the latter, preachers should "persuade men" to "be reconciled to God."

True preaching is of the Word. The world is hungering for the gospel and Biblical truth. "Preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2).

665. "Remember Jesus Christ" was Paul's word to a young preacher. We all need the admonition. . . . There are some churches in which the old gospel would seem as a new revelation. Nothing can take the place of the apostolic message, lovingly told. Jesus as the Saviour of men to-day, Jesus whose saving power has been manifestly experienced by the preacher, the Christ who died of old and who lives now, is, or should be, our constant theme.—*A. R. Main, M.A.*

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666. Two visitors in London went to hear two popular preachers, morning and evening of the Lord's Day. After the close of the evening service, they compared notes. One said: "You want to know my impression? Well, in the morning I couldn't see the Master for the man. In the evening I couldn't see the man for the Master."

667. A celebrated preacher, who was remarkable, in the first period of his ministry, for a boisterous mode of preaching, suddenly changed his whole manner in the pulpit, and adopted a mild and dispassionate mode of address. One of his brethren, observing it, enquired of him what had induced him to make the change. He answered: "When I was young, I thought it was the *thunder* that killed the people; but when I grew wiser, I discovered that it was the *lightning*. So I determined, in future, to thunder less and lighten more."—*Thornton*.

668. Dr. Brown was most at home in teaching the New Testament. He was a great exegete in his way, competent in scholarship, well acquainted with relative literature, and always with a mind of his own. . . . He was perhaps at his best in showing the vital applications of the narrative. He would say to us, "How would you bring this home to people lying on straw in a barn?"—*Dr. Blaikie*.

669. Mr. Wil. Taylor, of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Africa, said: "If the firstly does the business, I never reach the secondly. The moment I have impressed my hearers I stop. Preaching is like driving nails. If you continue to strike blows after the nail has gone home you will split your board. A good many preachers split their boards."

670. Ian Maclaren, in "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush," tells of the first sermon of a young minister who came to Drumtochty fresh from a theological college. To his maiden aunt who acted as his housekeeper, "he explained casually that his own wish was to preach a simple sermon, and that he would have done so had he been a private individual, but as he had held the Mac-Whammell scholarship, a deliverance was expected by the country. He would be careful and say nothing rash, but

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it was due to himself to state the present position of theological thought, and he might have to quote once or twice from Ewald." His saintly aunt gave him some advice: "Ye maun mind, laddie, that they're no clever and learned like what ye are, but juist plain country fouk, ilka ane wi' his ain temptation, an' a' sair trachled wi' mony cares o' this world. They 'ill need a clear word tae comfort their herts and show them the way everlasting. Ye 'ill say what's richt, nae doot o' that, and a' body 'ill be pleased, but, oh, laddie, be sure ye say a gude word for Jesus Christ." So he burnt the carefully prepared sermon, with its review of modern thought and its trenchant criticism of old-fashioned views. It was a sacrifice, but it had been such a sermon as led him humbly to hope that he would not be called to Edinburgh for at least two years. On the Sunday he gave a loving message. "Come unto me" was his text, and his mother's dying wish was fulfilled, "Speak a gude word for Jesus Christ."
—*A. R. Main, M.A.*

671. I heard a preacher once say in the course of a sermon that once, in London, he saw an auctioneer hold up a picture of a man, which he was trying to sell. He described all the good features of the painting; but you could only see the picture; the auctioneer was hidden behind it. "So," said the preacher, "we should strive so to hold up the Christ that the people shall see 'Jesus only.'"

672. Simplicity of style, then, as opposed to the artificial and rhetorical, is essential to earnestness; for who can believe that man to be intent on saving souls who seems to have laboured in the study only to make his sermon as fine as glittering imagery and high-sounding diction could render it. I could as soon believe a physician were intent on saving his fellow-creatures from death, who, when the plague was sweeping them into the grave, spent his time in studying to write his prescriptions in beautiful characters and classical Latinity.—*J. A. James.*

673. C. H. Spurgeon says: "From the deck of an Austrian gunboat we threw into the Lago Garda a succession of little pieces of bread, and presently small fishes came in shoals, till there seemed to be, as the old proverb puts it, more fish than

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water. They came to feed, and needed no music. Let the preacher give his people food, and they will flock around him, even if the sounding brass of rhetoric and the tinkling cymbals of oratory are silent."

674. Abraham Lincoln was once asked the secret of his extraordinary power of putting things, and he answered: "I remember, when a child, I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way that I could not understand. I don't think I ever got angry at anything else in my life. But that always disturbed my temper, and has ever since. I can remember going to my little bedroom, after hearing the neighbours talk of an evening with my father, and spending no small part of the night walking up and down, and trying to make out what was the meaning of their, to me, dark sayings. So it became a passion with me to put all I have to say into language that cannot be misunderstood."

675. "A sailor just off of a whaling expedition asked where he could hear a good sermon. On his return from the church his friend asked him, 'How did you like the sermon?' 'Not much; it was like a ship leaving for the whale-fishing: everything shipshape; anchors, cordage, sails, and provisions all right, but there were no harpoons on board.'"

676. You cannot attempt to dislodge one object of earthly affection or pursuit without having some other and better to substitute in its room. It was a dictum of the old philosophy that nature abhors a vacuum, and this is as true regarding the moral as the material world. The dove of old, with weary wing, would have retained its unstable perch on the restless billow had it not known of an ark of safety. You cannot tempt the shivering child of want to desert his garret or rude shielding until you can promise him some kindlier and more substantial shelter. You cannot induce the prodigal to leave off the husks of his miserable desert exile before you can tell him of a father's house and welcome; you cannot ask him to part with his squalid rags and tinsel ornaments until you can assure him of robe, and ring, and sandals. The husks and the tatters, wretched as they are, are better than nothing.—*Guthrie*.

6/7. In one of the islands on our northern coast a daring adventurer clambered down one of the steep cliffs, which rose perpendicularly from the ocean, in search of eggs of some sea-fowl. The precarious parapet ledge of rock on which he stood suddenly gave way, and with one giant bound plunged into the boiling surf beneath. In a moment the instinctive love of life made him spring from the yielding footing and lay hold on a branch of ivy which clung with uncertain tenacity to the precipice that rose sheer above him. Who would have had the madness or cruelty to shout to that wrestler for dear life to let go the treacherous ivy branch? Worthless as it was, it was his only chance of safety; and those on the summit of the cliff, the spectators of his imminent peril, were wise not by word or sign to disturb his grasp of what they anxiously felt might prove a brittle thread in these moments of suspense. But when a fleet foot had returned with the rope, and let it down by the side of the exhausted man, then, with no hesitating accents, did they call upon him to let go the fragile support and lay hold of what brought him up safe to their feet. In the same way do we find the inspired writers dealing with the human soul. They never exhort to abhor that which is evil without telling of some objective "good" to which the heart can cleave instead. "Charge them that are rich in the world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, *BUT in the living God.*" "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: . . . the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; *BUT he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*"—*Guthrie.*

PROCRASTINATION

678. The "putting off till some other time" habit is by no means rare, but always injurious. An old proverb says: "It is better to be idle than to be doing, but to no purpose." That is so, but to be busy about things that really matter is the ideal attainment. Hosts of people intend well: they simply postpone the matter, and act as though unlimited time was theirs, and countless opportunities would yet present themselves. The first need is to improve present opportunities; the future will bring others.

It is well to cultivate the habit of economising time. It is

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said that the more busy a man is, the more leisure does he apparently possess. This is paradoxical, but expresses a great truth.

It is said that the famous artist, Apelles, thought that day was lost upon which he did not use his pencil; hence the celebrated proverb: "*Nulla dies sine linea*"—"No day without a line." The same motto was adopted by Martin Luther when translating the New Testament.

679. The path up to the judgment-seat is not a way of preparation; nor at His bar is it a place to prepare for eternity. It is no time to prepare for battle when the enemy is in the camp: no time to make ready to meet a foe when he has broken open your door. There is such a thing as putting off preparation until it is too late. A man may neglect the care of his health until it is too late. A student may suffer the proper time to prepare for a profession to glide away until it is too late. A farmer may neglect to plough and sow until it is too late. A man on a rapid stream near a cataract may neglect to make efforts to reach the shore until it is too late. And so in religion. It is easy to put it off from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, from manhood to old age, until it shall be too late. Beyond that interview with God, there is no preparation. Your eternity is not to be made up of a series of successive probations, where, though you fail in one, you may avail yourself of another.—*Barnes*.

680. *Now* is the time to pitch in and achieve. Now! now! Remember, my friends, the present is the future from which you hoped so much.—*Norman Hapgood*.

681. W. E. Sellers, in "Strange Scenes and Strange Experiences," tells of a smallpox epidemic in the East End of London. One night late, he was walking home after a weary day, when his arm was eagerly clutched by two women. "What is it?" he said. "Oh, come with us at once, or else it will be too late. She wouldn't have a minister till a half an hour ago, and we have been looking for you ever since. She has been a terrible bad 'un, she has." "What is the matter?" "Smallpox." He reached the room. The poor creature, half raving with delirium, saw

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him enter, sprang up, stretched out her arm in terrible frenzy, shrieked, "Save me! Save me," and fell back—dead. Too late!

682. A gentleman standing by Niagara saw an eagle swoop down upon a frozen lamb encased in a floating piece of ice. The eagle stood upon it as it was "drifting" on towards the rapids. Every now and again the eagle would proudly lift its head into the air to look around him, as much as to say: "I am drifting on toward danger, but I know what I am doing; I will fly away and make good my escape before it is too late." When he neared the Falls he stooped and spread his powerful wings and leaped for his flight; but, alas! alas! while he was feasting on that carcass his feet had frozen to its fleece. He leaped and shrieked and beat upon the ice with his wings until ice, frozen lamb, and eagle went over the Falls and down into the chasm and darkness below. That is a graphic picture of the tippler, the sensualist, the embezzler, of any and every man who has begun to do evil, intending to stop before he goes too far.—*Selected by J. E. Denton.*

683. Be not like the foolish drunkard who, staggering home one night, saw his candle lit for him. "Two candles!" said he, for his drunkenness made him see double; "I will blow out one," and as he blew it out, in a moment he was in the dark. Many a man sees double through the drunkenness of sin: he has one life to sow his wild oats in, and then he half expects another in which to turn to God; so, like a fool, he blows out the only candle that he has, and in the dark he will have to lie down forever. Haste thee, traveller; thou hast but one sun, and after that sets, thou wilt never reach home. God help thee to make haste now!—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

684. Mr. J. M. Barrie, in "The Little Minister," has a character who always intended to cut down a certain tree, but the years slipped by and he neglected to do it. "I grew old," he said, looking for the axe." Here is the A B C of immediate decision:

"Acquaint now thyself with him," etc. (Job 22:21).

"Behold, now is the accepted time," etc. (2 Cor. 6:2).

"Come now, let us reason together," etc. (Isa. 1:18).

Remember the proverb: "Procrastination is the thief of time."

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685. "A gentleman tells how he stood by the railroad and watched the postmaster hang out his bag to be caught by the mail express soon to pass. A few minutes later the train came thundering round the curve. The mail agent looked out of his car, and then, thrusting out an iron arm attached to the side of it, snatched the bag, and the train sped on its way. If the postmaster had been late, even a second late, he would have missed the mail. Be in time for salvation, for

" 'Too late, too late, may be the cry;
Jesus of Nazareth has passed by.' "

686. "It is said that Richard Baxter saved up a thousand pounds which he purposed to devote to the work of God; but before the time came as he had purposed, the thousand pounds was lost in the investment in which he had placed it, and too late his eyes were opened to his mistake, and he ever afterwards deplored that he had not availed himself of the open doors of usefulness as they came to him day by day."

687. "Not yet," said a little boy, as he was busy with his trap and ball. "When I grow older, I will think about my soul." The little boy grew to be a young man. "Not yet," said the young man. "I am now about to enter into trade. When I see my business prosper, then I shall have more time than now." Business did prosper. "Not yet," said the man of business. "My children must have my care. When they are settled in life, I shall better be able to attend to religion." He lived to be a grey-headed man. "Not yet," still he cried. "I shall soon retire from trade, and then I shall have nothing else to do but read and pray." And so he died. He put off to another time what should have been done when a child. He lived without God, and died without hope.—*Dr. Haven.*

688. J. Stuart Holden writes: "Some few years ago I was visiting the Niagara Falls. We descended into the 'Cave of the Winds,' where the great cataract sweeps past with a roar that is absolutely deafening. I remarked to the attendant what a deafening noise he had to spend his time in. His answer was: 'I never hear the noise. When I first came, I thought I should never be able to bear it, but I have become so accustomed to the

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roar that I never hear it now.' He had become so familiar with the ceaseless repetition of the sounds that they had become normal to him. There is an awful danger of getting into a similar state regarding the voice of God."

PROPHECY

689. The power to portray future events belongs only to God. "I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:9, 10). No man can declare the end from the beginning. So, predictions concerning the future are not found in the sacred books of other religions. To foretell the future, infinite wisdom is needed. "No prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21).

The study of prophecy is needful. Too often it is entirely neglected.

Both Old and New Testaments contain many prophecies, of infinite variety, yet entirely harmonious. Old Testament predictions in regard to Christ, the Jewish people, and the kingdom of our Lord are very striking. Many prophecies have already been fulfilled, and an incontrovertible evidence of the inspiration of the Scriptures has thus been furnished. Every now and then, in the world's history, happenings are experienced which are most clearly foretold in God's word.

In the interpretation of prophecy, care must be taken lest men be wise above that which is written, or dogmatic where there is much diversity of view. Our Lord has warned us to "beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15).

There are many unfulfilled prophecies. God is in no hurry to complete His full designs. His people must patiently await His time, remembering that what He has done is a guarantee that the day shall come when every prophecy shall have been fulfilled.

690. It is deplorable that the professing church of to-day almost completely ignores and neglects the study of prophecy,

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a neglect which has for one of its results the loss of one of the most powerful weapons against infidelity. The denial of the Bible as the inspired word of God has become widespread. If prophecy were intelligently studied, such denial could not flourish as it does, for the fulfilled predictions of the Bible give the clearest and most conclusive evidence that the Bible is the revelation of God. To this must be added the fact that the destructive "Higher Criticism" denies the possibility of prophecy. . . . May we, who know and love His word, not neglect prophecy, for the prophetic Word is the lamp which shineth in a dark place.—*A. C. Gaebelstein.*

691. Here is a book in which over three hundred converging rays meet in one perfect portrait of a man who did not appear on earth till at least three hundred years after the last prophet had laid down his pen. Yet, in not one feature, however minute, does the portrait fail to predict the person! It cannot be said that the prophecy was written after the event, nor is it disputed that the events perfectly fulfil the prophecy. But the infidel must get rid somehow of the Bible. He is very much afraid of being too credulous, and so Bolingbroke comes to our aid. He found the death of Christ distinctly and minutely foretold by Isaiah in chapter 53. So he conjectured that Jesus, being familiar with the prophecy, by a series of preconcerted measures *actually planned and brought on His own crucifixion*, in exact accordance with the predictions, that He might give His disciples the triumph of the appeal to prophecy! Oh, the credulity of incredulity! We must become mere unthinking sponges to absorb such nonsense as that!—*A. T. Pierson.*

692. A traveller in a stage-coach attempted to divert the company and display his hostility to the Scriptures by throwing them into ridicule. "As to the *prophecies*," said he, in particular, "they were all written after the events took place." A minister in the coach, who had previously been silent, replied: "Sir, I must beg leave to mention one remarkable prophecy as an exception: 'Know this *first*, that there shall come in the latter days *scoffers*.'"—*J. Field.*

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693. Two rabbis were approaching Jerusalem. They observed a fox running upon the hill Zion. Rabbi Joshua wept. Rabbi Eliezah laughed. "Wherefore dost thou laugh?" said he who wept. "Nay, wherefore dost thou weep?" "I weep because I see what is written in Lamentations fulfilled: 'Because of the mount Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.'" "And therefore," he replied, "do I laugh, for when I see with mine own eyes that God hath fulfilled His threatening to the very letter, I have thereby a pledge that not one of His prophecies shall fail."

694. A brilliant Frenchman (Voltaire) more than a hundred years ago uttered a prophecy. He boasted that it had taken twelve men to set up Christianity, but he would show them that a single man was enough to overthrow it, and that *in a hundred years the Bible would be a forgotten book*. A simple-minded Galilean fisherman, the apostle Peter, uttered this prophecy more than eighteen hundred years ago: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever; for all flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever: and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:22-25). Which of the two prophecies stands fulfilled to-day? About the time when the hundred years of Voltaire ended, the Revised Version of the Bible was given to the world (1884), and millions of copies were in demand, and it is read and held in reverence wherever the English language is spoken; "and the sun never sets on its gleaming page."—*Christian Oracle*.

PROVIDENCE

695. Providence is God's foresight and care for His creatures. He superintends the affairs of His people, controls and directs those who put their trust in Him, causing everything to tend to the fulfillment of His righteous purposes. His people are the objects of His unceasing care, for nothing takes place with-

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out His permission, and "to them that love God all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28).

To those in the vale, life consists of an apparently confused mass of events. From the lowlands of earthly life, we cannot comprehend the grandeur of the divine plan. But from heaven's high hill the Almighty sees no confusion, no disconnected events, but countless seemingly unrelated and adverse experiences, like timber and bricks and stones fixed in proper positions in the building being erected to His glory.

Not until Joseph was raised to the throne could he see the meaning of being thrown into a pit, sold as a slave, and imprisoned, but now all is plain. So, only from the throne of the Almighty can the real plan of life be seen.

Often, by special intervention, God comes to the help of His people, at the exact moment of extremity. Two striking illustrations are found in the cases of Abraham and Hagar. Abraham's knife was uplifted to strike his son, and, just then, the angel of the Lord intervened, and prevented the tragedy (Gen. 22:10-12). Hagar, wandering in the wilderness of Beer-sheba, lifted up her voice and wept, for her child was dying, and just then, "God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water" (Gen. 21:19).

The supreme test of faith is when all is dark, yet the Christian believes that

"Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

696.

My bark is wafted to the strand
By breath divine,
And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine. —Dean Alford.

697. An old author, writes C. H. Spurgeon, assures us that "the Jews fancy, concerning the cloud that conducted Israel through the wilderness, that it did not only lead them in the way which they must go, but also fit the way for them to go upon it; that it cleared all the mountains and smoothed all the rocks; that it cleared all the bushes and removed all the rubs." What is probably a mere legend as to the type is abundantly true of the providence of God, which it so accurately represents.

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Our gracious God not only leads us in the way of mercy, but He prepares our path before us, providing for all our wants even before they occur.

698. The mind of a pious workman, named Thierney, was much occupied with the ways of God, which appeared to him full of inscrutable mysteries. The two questions, "How?" and "Why?" were constantly in his thoughts—whether he considered his own life, or the dispensations of Providence in the government of the world. One day, in visiting a ribbon manufactory, his attention was attracted by an extraordinary piece of machinery. Countless wheels and thousands of threads were twirling in all directions; he could understand nothing of its movements. He was informed, however, that all this motion was connected with the centre, where there was a chest which was kept shut. Anxious to understand the principle of the machine, he asked permission to see the interior. "The master has the key," was the reply. The words were like a flash of light. Here was the answer to all the perplexed thoughts. Yes, the Master has the key. He governs and directs all. It is enough. What need I know more?

699. There is a striking passage, in which a great philosopher, the famous Bishop Berkeley, describes the thought which occurred to him of the inscrutable designs of Providence, as he saw in St. Paul's Cathedral a fly moving on one of the pillars. "It requires," said he, "some comprehension on the part of an intelligent spectator to take in at one view the various parts of the building in order to judge of their symmetry. But to the fly, whose prospect was confined to a little part of one of the stones of a single pillar, the joint beauty of the whole, or the distinct use of its parts, was inconspicuous. To that limited view the small irregularities on the surface of the hewn stone seemed to be so many deformed rocks and precipices."—*Dean Stanley*.

700. I asked a hermit once in Italy how he could venture to live alone, in a single cottage, on the top of a mountain, a mile from any habitation. He replied that "Providence was his very next-door neighbor."—*Sterne*.

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701. Dr. Moon, in his journal, says: "In the summer of 1852, when the funds of my work for the blind were very low, I had contracted a debt of twenty-two pounds. The creditor requested payment by a certain day. We had reached the night previous to the day on which I had promised to pay the money, but none had come. A blind lady, living in Brighton, who had learned to read my embossed books, awoke about four o'clock and read the thirty-fourth Psalm, till she came to the sixth verse, 'This poor man cried,' etc. She became suddenly impressed that I had some pecuniary difficulties in my work. She asked the Lord to show her if I had any such difficulty, and also whether she should relieve me. When dressed she went to her cash-box and took out a five-pound note, which she felt was not sufficient. She then took out a second, a third, a fourth, and, feeling that these would suffice, she placed them in her purse, where there were two sovereigns. On being shown into my study she enquired if I was in any difficulty about money matters connected with my work for the blind. As I had determined to make no one acquainted with the fact, besides the Lord, I asked her kindly to excuse me saying anything. She then asked me to reach out my hand, and, feeling for it, she placed in it her purse, saying that I was to take the contents and put them to the use that I thought best. I found there the exact sum of money I had to pay away that evening. When she placed the purse in my hand she had forgotten that the two sovereigns were there. Without these sovereigns the amount required would not have been complete."

702. On the place where we live chicks are kept, and it has fallen to the writer's lot to be the one to look after them. Every night they would be shut in securely, and early in the morning they could be seen pecking away at the window of their house, and for awhile there would be a running to and fro, and a fumbling, and a peeping, and a pushing for some egress before the appointed time. But the owner, who had shut them in lest harm befall them from some marauder, knows best when it is time to open the door. Thus are God's dealings with His children. Oft indeed they are shut in, and within it does now and then seem dark, and eagerly enough do men peck away at where the light is seen to stream in, and gladly would they

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escape before the time. But He who watches even over each hair of their heads knoweth best when it is time to open the door.—*Ivan Panin.*

703. "There is an aged Christian in Dublin," writes Henry Varley, "with whom I have often spoken, who passed through the following eventful experience: 'Some years since,' he said, 'I was travelling on horseback in one of the country districts, when the sudden report of a pistol-shot reached me. I was satisfied that I had been aimed at, but nevertheless thankfully conscious that I had escaped. Hastening onwards, I reached my home in safety, and went into the house. It had been my custom for years to carry a small Bible in the breast-pocket of my coat. Taking it out on this occasion, judge my surprise at finding a leaden bullet imbedded in the leaves. It had penetrated as far as the Gospel of John. Removing the bullet, and opening the book at the spot where it rested, my eye fell upon the words, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me."'"

704. It is related that the celebrated Welsh preacher, Christmas Evans, was once discussing the potato question with his thrifty, diligent wife, and, perhaps in a playful, but still in a characteristic, way, said to her, "Catherine, you never mind the potatoes: put your trust in Providence, and all will be well." "I'll tell you what we'll do, Christmas," replied Catherine, "you go and sit down on the top of Moelly Gest, waiting for Providence, and *I'll go and hoe the potatoes*; and we shall see to which of us Providence will come first."

705. During more than fifty centuries man had fixed his gaze on the starry sky, observing the motions of the planets, and seeking to trace their laws, yet the law of harmony eluded the search of learned men; the world, so far as they knew, performed eccentric circles, the object of which they could not comprehend. The universe was a confused mass, a labyrinth which baffled them. One day a man of genius said to himself, "The worlds must be considered with reference to the sun, and not with reference to the earth." He placed the sun as the

centre, and directly the harmony appeared: everything was explained, the planets and their satellites traced out their regular orbits, and the system of the universe was discovered. God is the sun of spirits, and the true centre of the universe; and it is from the heart of His truth alone that we can judge of the law of our destinies.—*Eugene Bersier.*

PUNCTUALITY

706. In all ranks of life, men of slow, tardy habits are heavily handicapped. They carry a self-imposed burden which impedes progress.

As a rule, the man who cannot be trusted to keep appointments can scarcely be trusted in anything else.

Yet how common is the failing of unpunctuality! How many there are who are always just a little late, which habit results not merely in loss of time to self, but inconvenience to others, and which creates in their minds the impression that the one who is unpunctual is unreliable in other ways as well.

It is said of Melancthon that whenever he made an appointment, he expected not only the hour, but the minute, to be fixed, that the day might not run away in idleness of suspense. Sir E. W. Hamilton wrote of the late W. E. Gladstone: "His industry was greatly furthered by economy of time, which he exercised in the most rigid manner. He never wasted a single moment: every chink in the day was filled up, and he consequently always seemed able to get through anything and everything, thus constituting a good illustration of the paradox that the more busy a man is, the more leisure does he apparently possess. This habit of economising time was aided by a kindred habit of punctuality: he never failed to keep an appointment to the moment."

It would be well if Melancthon and Gladstone had a few more followers.

707. "Punctuality is a quality which the interest of mankind requires to be diffused through all the ranks of life, but which many seem to consider as a vulgar and ignoble virtue, below the ambition of greatness, or attention of wit, scarcely requisite

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amongst men of gaiety and spirit, and sold at its highest rate when it is sacrificed to a frolic or a jest."

708. "Do not act as if you had ten thousand years to throw away. Death stands at your elbow. Be good for something while you live and it is in your power."

709. I much wish you to acquire a habit of punctuality with respect to time, as the want of this is very inconvenient in the person who fails, and gives trouble to others. If you follow my example, you will find the advantage long before you are as old as I am. I began to aim at this almost fifty years ago, and I have seldom, if ever, been five minutes behind my time, unless unavoidably prevented, for nearly fifty years past.—*John Newton.*

710. A singular mischance has occurred to some of our friends. At the instant when He ushered them on existence, God gave them a work to do, and He also gave them a competency of time; so much time, that if they began at the right moment, and wrought with sufficient vigour, their time and their work would end together. But, a good many years ago, a strange misfortune befell them. A fragment of their allotted time was lost. They cannot tell what became of it, but sure enough it has dropped out of existence; for, just like two measuring-lines laid alongside, the one an inch shorter than the other, their work is always ten minutes in advance of the time. They are not irregular. They are never too soon. Their letters are posted the very minute after the mail is shut; they arrive at the wharf just in time to see the steamboat off; they come in sight of the terminus precisely as the station gates are closing. They do not break any engagement nor neglect any duty; but they systematically go about it too late, and usually too late by about the same fatal interval.—*Dr. J. Hamilton.*

711. A woman who always used to attend public worship with great punctuality, and took care always to be in time, being asked how it was she could always come so early, answered "that it was part of her religion never to disturb the religion of others."

REDEMPTION

712. To redeem is to buy back. Man is, in the Scriptures, said to be "sold under sin." But God, in infinite mercy, was moved to effect our redemption; or, in other words, to buy us back from the slavery of sin. The price was "the precious blood of Christ." "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:19). This price is sufficient for the redemption of all mankind. "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1 John 2:2). Redemption, however, in the Scriptural sense, is not completed by merely paying the price. If that were so, then all mankind would be saved, no matter what their character. That which is purchased must become the property and possession of the purchaser. "When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 5:4). In order that we might become "the sons of God without rebuke," "Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:14).

Nor is redemption complete without the whole man, body and spirit. It comprehends deliverance of the body from death and the grave. "We wait for our adoption . . . the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). According as it is written: "I will ransom them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death. O death, where are thy plagues? O Sheol, where is thy destruction?" (Hos. 13:14). When redemption is complete Christ "shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied."

713. "In whom we have redemption." This explains the particular nature of the deliverance from the kingdom of darkness. It was not a mere rescue, as a slave liberated by the compassion of his master; nor as of a debtor set free, at his earnest entreaties, by his creditor and lord, as in the parable of the ten thousand talents; nor was it accomplished by the exertion of force only, as Abraham delivered Lot, and David his followers from the Amalekites at Ziklag. But this deliverance from Satan's dominions is a *redemption*, something purchased back, a rescue

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by a ransom price paid down. It implies a valuable consideration, as it were, first given: a full discharge of all that was due to the law, righteousness, and truth of God, by a substitute or surety, "a daysman coming between" the offended majesty of Heaven and us, and making a perfect satisfaction to divine justice on our behalf. "Christ" hath in this manner, and no other, "redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."—*Wilson*.

714. "A few years ago," said D. L. Moody, "I was going away to preach on Sunday morning, when a young man drove up in front of us. He had an aged woman with him. 'Who is that young man?' I asked. 'Do you see that beautiful meadow?' said my friend, 'and that land there with the house upon it?' 'Yes.' 'His father drank that all up,' he said. Then he went on to tell me all about him. His father was a great drunkard, squandered his property, died, and left his wife in the poorhouse. 'And that young man,' he said, 'is one of the finest young men I ever knew. He has toiled hard and earned money, and bought back the land; he has taken his mother out of the poorhouse, and now he is taking her to church.' I thought: That is an illustration for me. The first Adam, in Eden, sold us for naught, but the Messiah, the second Adam, came and bought us back again. The first Adam brought us *to the poorhouse*, the second Adam makes us kings and priests unto God."

715. "No religion presents the blessed fact of redemption for lost sinners but that of Christianity. And that one blessed revelation is worth everything else besides. Not long ago a young Brahmin of India came to the house of a missionary seeking an interview. In the course of conversation he said: 'Many things which Christianity contains I find in Hindooism; but there is one thing which Christianity has and Hindooism has not.' 'What is that?' the missionary asked. His reply was striking: 'A Saviour.' There are a great many religions in the world, but there is only one which avails for a sinner, and that is the one which contains and reveals a Saviour."

716. We are like the little child who was in the garden, with his mother, when a bee stung his mother on the palm of her

hand. The child huddled close to the mother and cried, for fear the bee would sting him too. "Look," said the mother, "the sting of the bee is in the palm of my hand. He can not sting you also." So Jesus suffered for us the sting of death.—*J. R. Miller.*

717. Willis R. Hotchkiss, the missionary to Africa, tells of his long, long search for the word "saviour," in the unwritten language of the tribe to which he had been sent. At last he chanced upon it in a story the headman was telling him about a man who was attacked by a lion, and of how he was *saved*. At once he used the word, applying it to Christ. "The black man's face lighted up in the lurid blaze of the campfire, and he said: 'Master! I understand now! This is what you have been trying to tell us all these moons. Yesu died to save us from sin and from the hands of Satan!' I have dwelt four years practically alone in Africa," adds Mr. Hotchkiss; "I have been thirty times stricken with the fever, three times attacked by lions and several times by rhinoceroses, a number of times ambushed by the natives, for fourteen months I never saw a piece of bread, and have eaten everything from ants to rhinoceroses; but let me say to you, I would gladly go through the whole thing again if I could have the joy of again bringing that word 'saviour,' and flashing it into the darkness that envelops another tribe in central Africa."

REGENERATION

718. As applied to the great change called conversion, the term "regeneration" occurs only once in the Bible—"the washing of regeneration" (Tit. 3:5). But its equivalent, "born again," is found in John 3:3. (See also John 1:12, 13, and 1 Pet. 1:23.) The word indicates a great, vital change in human experience; so thorough and complete that nothing short of the term "regeneration" could fully express it. Jesus, in conversation with Nicodemus, showed its necessity in order that a man may understand and enter into the Kingdom of God. Two of the Scriptures quoted above should be considered together. John 3:5 reads: "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Tit. 3:5 reads: "According to

his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." Scholars generally agree in regarding the "water" in John and the "washing" in Titus as referring to baptism. In both passages the order is the same. At first sight it seems as if the order should be reversed. We are led to think of the new birth as being *first* the work of the Spirit, whatever place the "water" may hold. But the passage in Titus throws light on that in John. The "renewing" of the former applies to the process of sanctification in the new life. This makes the order intelligible, and in harmony with other Scripture teaching.

But some imagine that the passages, if baptism is intended, place too much importance upon that ordinance; and still more, if the order is to be taken as it stands. This objection, however, has no weight if baptism be understood as it should be. It is too frequently regarded as a mere physical act. The proper act—immersion in and emersion from water—must be duly attended to; but the subject must realise its spiritual import. This is set forth very strikingly by the apostle Paul in Rom. 6:4: "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Here there is a mental process corresponding with the bodily process. The mental process is set forth as the essential and indispensable thing in baptism. Without it the physical act is worthless and deceptive. The mental process is that of the will, the understanding, and the affection following after Christ; and uniting with him in his death to the old life, his burial in the grave and his resurrection from the dead to a new life. Thus the physical act of baptism becomes the necessary demonstration of the great change called regeneration.

719. "Man unregenerate is ruined in body, soul, and spirit, a frail and mortal creature. From Adam his father he inherits a shattered constitution. He is the child of a fallen progenitor; a scion from a degenerate stock. Superior to Adam, the exile from Eden, in physical, intellectual, and moral nature, none of his descendants can rise. It is not in nature to improve itself: for above its fountain the stream cannot rise. . . . Man in his ruins is, however, a proper subject of a remedial system. He

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is susceptible of renovation. Therefore God has placed him under a regenerating economy. This economy contemplates the regeneration of the whole human constitution, and proposes as its consummation the transformation of spirit, soul, and body. The destiny of the regenerate is described by Paul in one sentence: 'As we now bear the image of the earthly Adam, we shall then bear the image of the heavenly Adam.'"

720. Christ's way with sinners (says Brierley) was to love them, to believe in their recoverability; while Schopenhauer declares you can no more change the character of a bad man than the character of a tiger. Nietzsche sneers at the weak and exalts force and repression, but the gospel goes on hoping and goes on saving.

721. "A sculptor may take a piece of rough marble, and work from it the figure of a Madonna, but it is still nothing but marble, and lifeless. A carver may take a piece of wood, and work out of it a scene of conviviality, but it is still wood, and insensible. A watch-cleaner may take a watch, the mainspring of which is broken; he may clean every wheel, cog, pin, hand, the face, and the cases, but, the mainspring not rectified, it will be as useless for going and time-telling as before. A painter may decorate the outside of a pest-house with the most beautiful colours; but if he produces no change within, it is still a pest-house. A poor man may clothe himself in the garb of a monarch, but he is still a poor man. A leper may cover all his spots with his garment, but he is still a leper. So the sinner may reform in all the externals of his life, so that he shall attain to the moral finery of Saul of Tarsus, or Nicodemus, a master in Israel, but except he be cleansed by the blood of Christ, be born again from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

722. "Christ gave a new calendar of time to the world. All the years of time have been caught up into the name of Christ, and history has been unified in Him. But, what is more important, Christ has given a new calendar of time to the soul. B. C., in its personal meaning, describes the days before Christ appeared

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to our faith to turn darkness into light. A. D. stands for the years of the Lord in which Christ lives in and through the soul to reveal Himself to the world. The question is, 'Is it B. C. or A. D. in your soul?' (2 Cor. 5:17)."

723. F. B. Meyer tells of a woman who, on her way to commit suicide, heard the singing in Christ Church, Westminster, London, and stole into the porch. She was only a poor, soiled, broken bit of London's outcast womanhood. It happened that Mr. Meyer preached on the story of the potter, the vessel made and remade. She was charmed at the prospect of reformation.

724. Suppose you were in a dark room in the morning, the shutters closed and fastened, and only as much light coming through the chinks as made you aware it was day outside. And suppose you should say to a companion with you, "Let us open the windows, and let in the light." What would you think if he replied, "No, no, you must first put the darkness out, or the light will not enter"? You would laugh at his absurdity. Just so, we cannot put sin out of our hearts to prepare for Christ's entering; we must open and take Him in, and sin will flee. Fling the window open at once, and let Christ come in.—*Dr. Edmond.*

725. A raw countryman having brought his gun to the gunsmith for repairs, the latter is reported to have examined it, and, finding it to be almost too far gone for repairing, said: "Your gun is in a very worn-out, ruinous, good-for-nothing condition; what sort of repairing do you want for it?" "Well," said the countryman, "I don't see as I can do with anything short of a new stock, lock, and barrel; that ought to set it up again." "Why," said the smith, "you had better have a new gun altogether." "Ah!" was the reply, "I never thought of that; and it strikes me that's just what I do want. A new stock, lock, and barrel; why, that's about equal to a new gun altogether, and that's what I'll have." Just the sort of repairing that man's nature requires. The old nature cast aside as a complete wreck and good for nothing, and a *new one imparted*.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

REPENTANCE

726. One has said: "When a man is so thoroughly filled with sorrow on account of his sins that his will is subdued to the will of God, and he says, 'I will sin no more; I will hereafter submit to the will of God,' he has repented." "Repentance," says Prof. J. W. McGarvey, "fully defined, is a change of will caused by sorrow for sin, and leading to a reformation of life."

Repentance is often defined as sorrow for sin. This is an accompaniment, but not repentance itself. Nor can repentance be defined as reformation of life; that is a fruit of repentance. (See Matt. 3:8.) There is, in genuine repentance, sorrow for sin: a change of will, and newness of life.

The necessary change in the mind, affections, and life is produced by the gospel. It is within the power of man to remain unmoved. If he refuses to give an attentive hearing, or to submit to its claims, he cannot be saved. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5). "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38).

The trouble is, so many postpone repentance. Augustine said: "God has promised forgiveness to your repentance, but He has not promised to-morrow to your procrastination." "There is one case of death-bed repentance recorded in the Bible—the penitent thief—that no one should despair, and only one, that no one should presume."

727. The results of repentance are mostly implied in the foregoing sections. (a) We first note what may be called the Godward side. It is "unto life" (Acts 11:18); "toward God" (Acts 20:21); "unto salvation" (2 Cor. 7:10); "unto the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38); "that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus" (Acts 3:19, 20). (b) On man's part, repentance is followed by his turning to God (Acts 3:19), and the doing of works meet for repentance (Acts 26:20; Matt. 3:8). The sinner, "out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full

purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience." This is written in the belief that repentance implies the making of restitution where this is possible. This seems in harmony with the very meaning of the word, and with the Saviour's approval of the conduct of Zaccheus (Luke 19:8, 9). Dare we say that Adam Clark's words are too strong: "No man should expect mercy at the hand of God, who, having wronged his neighbour, refuses, when he has it in his power, to make restitution. Were he to weep tears of blood, both the justice and mercy of God would shut out his prayers if he make not his neighbour amends for the injury he has done him"? At any rate, such words emphasise that repentance is not a maudlin sentiment.—*A. R. Main, M.A.*

728. "True repentance, like that of Zaccheus, affects eye, ear, hand, foot: he saw he was a sinner, heard the message of salvation, took hold of Christ by faith, and ran joyfully in the way of obedience."

729. "Years ago," says J. Wilbur Chapman, "I was in an old-fashioned camp-meeting in the United States. They told me that the preceding summer they had a very distinguished doctor of divinity there from the city of New York, and he had preached to them on repentance in such a scholarly way that they were not at all sure they ever had repented, and the longer he preached the more confused they were. At that meeting, also, was a famous old preacher who was known all over the State. He was not much of a speaker. His grammatical mistakes were many, but God used him. When the doctor of divinity finished his celebrated sermon on repentance this old man rose up and said: 'Will you allow me to preach on repentance? I will take five minutes to do it.' The doctor of divinity consenting, he began to walk down the aisle, and every step he took he said this: 'I am going to hell.' You can imagine the effect of that. A little bit startled, the people began to get up all around the building to see him go. He got about two-thirds of the way down the aisle, and the interest was at fever heat, when suddenly he turned squarely about and said: 'I am going to heaven.' Getting up on the platform, he said: 'That is repentance.'"

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730. "What repentance is not may be illustrated by reference to the negro who, on his death-bed, determined to repent and forgive his enemies; he forgave one enemy with this proviso, 'If I get well, dat nigger got to look out.'"

731. Once I went forth to look for Repentance. I sought her day and night in the city of Mansoul. I asked many if they knew where she dwelt, and they said they had never seen her. I met one, grave and scholarly, who told me what she was like, and bade me seek her earnestly; but he did not tell me where she was to be found. Then, all sad at heart, and wearied with my search, I went forth without the city walls, and climbed a lonely hill, and up a steep and rugged way, until I came in sight of the cross, and of Him who hung thereon. And, lo, as I looked upon Him, there came one and touched me. Then instantly my heart was melted, and all the great deeps of my soul were broken up. "Ah, Repentance! I have been looking everywhere for you," I said. "Thou wilt always find me here," said Repentance; "here, in sight of my crucified Lord. I tarry ever at His feet."—*Mark Guy Pearse*.

732. It has been said that "a personal consecration" should be spelled "a purse-and-all consecration." And when a United States official awhile ago received a sum of restitution money from a man who said he had been converted, the official said: "I believe in his conversion more by this restitution of a hundred dollars than though he had given a thousand dollars to charity."

733. When a wound in a soldier's foot refuses to heal, the surgeon examines it very minutely, and manipulates every part. Each bone is there, and in its place; there is no apparent cause for the inflammation, but yet the wound refuses to heal. The surgeon probes and probes again, until his lancet comes into contact with a hard foreign substance. "Here it is," saith he; "a bullet is lodged here; this must come out, or the wound will never close." Thus may some concealed sin work long disquiet in a seeking soul. May the Lord search us and try us, and see if there be any evil way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting.—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

734. In India there is a tomb of wonderful architecture. Twenty thousand men were twenty-two years in erecting that and the buildings around it. Standing in that tomb, if you speak or sing, after you have ceased you hear the echo coming from a height of one hundred and fifty feet. It is not like other echoes. The sound is drawn out in sweet prolongation, as though the angels of God were chanting on the wing. How many souls here to-day, in the tomb of sin, will lift up the voice of penitence and prayer? If now they would cry unto God, the echo would drop from afar—not struck from the marble cupola of an earthly mausoleum, but sounding back from the warm heart of angels, flying with the news; for there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.—*Talmage*.

735. The gondoliers at Venice, when we were sojourning in that queen of the Adriatic, frequently quarrelled with each other, and used such high words and ferocious gestures that we were afraid murder would come of it; yet they never came to blows; it was only their rough way of disputing. Often and often have we heard men upbraiding themselves for their sins, and crying out against the evil which their follies have wrought them, yet these very people have continued in their transgressions, and have even gone from bad to worse. They barked too much at sin to fall to and destroy it. Their enmity to evil was mere feigning; like the sword-play of the stage, which looks like earnest fight, but no wounds are given or received. Let those who play at repentance remember that they who repent in mimicry shall go to hell in reality.—*Spurgeon*.

736. Do not try a death-bed repentance, my brother. I have stood by many a death-bed, and few indeed have there been where I could have believed that the man was in a condition physically (to say nothing of anything else) clearly to see and grasp the message of the gospel. I know that God's mercy is boundless. I know that a man, going—swept down that great Niagara—if, before his little skiff tilts over into the awful rapids, he can make one great bound with all his strength, and reach the solid ground—I know he *may be saved*. It is an awful risk to run. A moment's miscalculation, and skiff and voyager alike are whelming in the green chaos below, and come

up mangled into nothing, far away down yonder over the white, turbulent foam. "One was saved upon the cross," as the old divines used to tell us, "that none might despair, and only one, that none might presume."—*Alex. Maclaren*.

RESTORATION PLEA

737. Sectarianism in the Christian world, so called, is the growth of centuries. Sects have multiplied, for the most part, I believe, from a sincere desire to get nearer to, and to follow more closely and faithfully, the teachings of the Scriptures. All such efforts are commendable; but their fault and failure in the past have been in closing the gates, so to speak, which should have been left wide open. The sects have been formed by being content with partial reformatations. Reformatations are unnecessary. The religion of Christ as we find it in the only place where it is divinely exhibited—in the New Testament—is perfect. It was unfolded and perfected by the instrumentality of the apostles, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13-15). What is needed, therefore, is a full and unfettered RESTORATION of the religion of Christ as we find it in the New Testament. Creeds, confessions of faith, human formulas, must all be swept aside and the New Testament alone become the standard of appeal and the basis of our faith and practice.

It is quite certain that for the first hundred years, at least, the early church was exclusively and absolutely dependent upon Christ's inspired messengers for all that it required to know in order to its perfection in the Christian life. Thus it was kept united as "one body," and by its zeal in "good works" it showed forth the praises of Him who had called His people out of darkness into His glorious light.

Let the whole body of believers throughout the world solemnly pledge itself to the guidance of the New Testament alone, for all that it needs to do the will of God. There may be variations in administration, but the foundation principle being one, the unity of the Christian world must soon become an accomplished fact.

738. The plea of churches of Christ is, in a word, the restoration of New Testament Christianity and the union of all Chris-

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tians upon this basis. The proposition urged upon the religious world by the Campbells was, to begin anew; to begin at the beginning; to ascend the stream to the pure fountain of truth, disregarding all decrees of popes, councils, and synods; all traditions, perversions, and corruptions; to work, not a reformation of the church as sought by Luther and Calvin, but its complete restoration at once to its original purity and perfectness. The conclusion was that the union of Christians for which the Master prayed could result from nothing short of the destruction of creeds and confessions of faith, inasmuch as human creeds and confessions had destroyed Christian union: that the teaching of the apostles is the only and all-sufficient means of uniting all the people of God, and the union of Christians with the apostles' testimony is all-sufficient, and alone sufficient, to the conversion of the world to Christ.—*F. D. Power.*

739. The churches in this Restoration movement aim to restore the Bible to its primitive place in producing penitents, guiding them unto salvation and in giving to the churches all instructions needed for their edification and guidance. It will be noticed that this modern movement for Christian union does not seek to introduce new doctrines into the religious world. It seeks rather the restoration of the old Jerusalem gospel with its doctrines, ordinances, and fruits. Its promoters thoroughly believe in all the truths accepted by evangelical bodies, and simply strive to remove the sectarian growths that have fastened themselves to the old ship Zion during its course through the centuries. Among its favorite mottoes are these:

No book but the Bible.

No creed but the Christ.

No name but the divine.

No plea but the gospel.

No aim but to serve.

In Christ—unity.

In opinions—liberty.

In all things—charity.

—*Henry F. Lutz.*

740. "It is often said: 'Oh, names are nothing!' I reply: 'Just so; human names *are* nothing, and for that reason they are profitless and may be set aside as of no service. . . . Let the

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dying man be assured that he is a Christian, a disciple, a saint, a child of God, a follower of the Lamb, and it will afford him infinitely more consolation and hope in the face of the judgment and the world to come than the appropriation of such names as Calvinist, Lutheran, Episcopalian, etc. Let the church of Jesus associate her Lord's infinitely worthy name with all her prayers and deeds: let her bear this name aloft through every scene of her pilgrimage: let her unfurl it alone before her militant hosts in every hour of danger: let her grow impatient of any other name, regard the mention of it as a sign of weakness, a symbol of treachery, a precursor of ruin—then will her triumph be as unimpeded as her honor will be complete.' ”

741. FIVE INEVITABLE ISSUES.—

A divine Christ or no Saviour.

An inspired Bible or no Scriptures.

A Scriptural baptism or no baptism.

A united church or no world-conquest.

A religion of service or no religion.

742. “God has promised us ‘an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.’ Ptolemy, when he would build the celebrated lighthouse, Pharos, one of the seven wonders of the world, called to his assistance Sostratus, the great architect. The king ordered his own name on the structure. But Sostratus felt that his name, rather than the king's, should be perpetuated; and so he cut the king's name in plaster, but carved his own in the granite. The waves soon washed away the plaster, and the king's name was gone, leaving the name of Sostratus in enduring letters. Our human names—Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian—however dear to us, are destined to die. The waves of time will wash all away except the ‘everlasting name,’ the name of our Prophet, Priest and King.”

743. H. W. Beecher, at a communion service, once said: “For convenience’ sake, we now use the names ‘Methodist,’ ‘Congregational,’ ‘Presbyterian,’ and the like, but let me speak the language of heaven, and call you simply ‘Christians.’” Heaven's language should always be used; then, in this respect, at any rate, there would be Christian union.

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744. Upon closing his lectures on art, Joshua Reynolds said: "And now, gentlemen, I have but one name to present to you; it is the incomparable name of Michael Angelo." So, in endeavoring to present a platform upon which union can be based, we point with reverence to the one incomparable name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and say, as did John Wesley: "Would to God that all party names and unscriptural forms might be forgotten, and that we might all sit at the feet of the one Master. We must

"Let names and sects and parties fall,
And Jesus Christ be all in all."

745. At the Centennial Convention of churches of Christ, held in Pittsburgh, U. S. A., in October, 1909, and attended by fifty thousand delegates, W. E. Ellis said: "The great Restoration movement was born in answer to the Saviour's prayer that His people might be one, that the world might believe, and came upon the stage to accomplish its twofold mission, made imperative by the divided state of Christendom and the lost condition of the world. This is the work God has called us to do. We are here to persuade the people of God to be reconciled to each other, and to persuade the world to be reconciled to God. We stand in the attitude of ambassadors for Christ, beseeching Christian people to lay down their weapons of warfare against each other, and pleading with the world to lay down its weapons of warfare against God. . . . Christian unity is necessary to make the evangelisation of the world possible. To see the heathen world dying while God's people in so-called Christian lands are spending their energies in building up party walls, is a sight to make angels weep."

746. To follow imperfect, uncertain, or corrupted traditions, in order to avoid erring in our own judgment, is but to exchange one danger for another. It is said that, some years ago, there was a bridge at Bath in so crazy a condition that persons chose rather to make a long circuit than run the risk of crossing it. One day, however, a very nervous lady, hurrying home to dress for the evening, came suddenly upon the spot, without, till that moment, remembering the danger. What was she to do? If she went on, the frail arch might give way under her; to go round would be fatiguing, and attended with loss of time. She

stood for some moments trembling in anxious hesitation. At last a lucky thought occurred to her—she called for a sedan chair, and was *carried over* in that conveyance. Now, when people, who think to escape the dangers of having to judge for themselves in religious matters, by choosing to take some guide as an infallible one, and believe or disbelieve as he bids them—thus adding to the undiminished previous chances of error, the additional chances against the authority they have chosen—what is this but putting, not only their own weight, but that of the sedan chair also, on the tottering arch?—*Whately*.

747. Not long ago a great Sunday-school Festival was held in Liverpool. There was to be a massed assembly of boys and girls in front of St. George's Hall. Long before the time appointed, a little company of boys, bearing certain numbers, arrived at the great open space, and took up their positions, marking out the squares. Then, by and by, bands of Sunday-school children came marching in from all quarters, from north, south, east, and west, filling in the squares, until a mighty concourse was assembled and thousands upon thousands of youthful voices joined in the grand hymn: "All hail the power of Jesus' name." But the boys who had been first upon the scene were lost to sight. They were the boys who had marked the ground. So it is in this great Restoration movement. Here and there our churches stand. We are some of the boys marking the ground. And when that great and glorious day of the Lord comes, the boys who mark the ground will be lost to sight in the great assembly of the redeemed, but the Father, who notes the very sparrows when they fall, will remember the boys who have marked the ground.—*G. T. Tickle*.

748. When Sir Roger de Coverley came to his estate, the good knight found three parts of his house altogether useless. The best room had the reputation of being haunted; noises had been heard in another; and his mother had had several chambers shut up, in which deaths, or other disagreeable events, had occurred. In this manner, his habitation was reduced to so small a compass that he found himself almost shut out of his own house. This story presents itself to my mind when I see men, without sufficient reason, abandoning part of their rightful

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possession of Christian doctrine, and confining themselves to a narrow range of Scripture truth. There may be danger attendant on every truth, since there is none that may not be perverted by some, or that may not give offense to others; but, in the case of anything which plainly appears to be truth, every danger must be faced. We must maintain the truth as we have received it, and trust to Him who is "The Truth," to prosper and defend it. —*Whately.*

749. Supposing the apostles and their divine Master had really regarded it as a part—and it must have been a most essential part, if one at all—of the Christian system; had they really designed that there should be, for the universal church, any institution answering to the oracle of God as the Tabernacle—it is wholly incredible that the Lord Jesus Himself should be perpetually spoken of as the Head of His church, without any reference to any supreme authority on earth, to any human body as His representative and vicegerent. Now, they do not merely omit all such reference, but they omit it in such a manner, and under such circumstances, as plainly to amount to an exclusion. A ship was about to sail for a certain harbour without the captain, who had been usually the commander, but who was then called to serve elsewhere. He came on board to take leave, and to warn the officers and others of the dangerous rocks and shoals, which, to his knowledge, beset the entrance; exhorting them to keep a good lookout, and also to enquire carefully into the character of any pilot who might offer his services; as some, he was certain, were in league with wreckers and would purposely steer the ship on rocks, that these wretches might plunder the wreck. And if we were told there was, *to his knowledge, a lighthouse* erected there as a sure landmark; and a ship could not go wrong that did but steer straight for that; should we not at once exclaim that, since *he said not a word* of this, he must be either a fool or a knave? And, on being assured that he was an eminently wise and good man, and thoroughly well informed, we should say: "Then this story of the lighthouse must be a fiction." And now look at Paul's farewell (Acts 20:29-31) to the elders at Miletus, where, in the immediate prospect of death, warning his disciples of the dangers to which they would be exposed, and showing them how to meet them, he said not one

word of any infallible judge or tribunal, but only exhorted them to watch, and remember what had been taught them.—*Whately*.

RESURRECTION

750. This is the salient doctrine of the Christian faith. Remove our Lord's resurrection, and Christianity will fall and crumble to nothing, for you take away the very keystone from this great arch. You thus prove Calvary, our preaching, faith, etc., to be in vain, and that we are yet in our sins. (See 1 Cor. 15:14-17.)

Dr. Philip Schaff wrote: "Before we can reason the resurrection out of history we must reason Paul and Christianity out of existence. We must admit the miracle or frankly confess that we stand before an inexplicable mystery." Spinoza said: "If I could believe the resurrection, I would become a Christian at once."

We should rejoice that no event has greater proof, for Christ's resurrection is the basis of all we are and hope for. Against this doctrine the opposition of unbelievers has done as little damage as one bullet shot against the world's strongest fortress. Christ being our head, and we being members of His body, some day we shall follow the glory of our Head, and share in His triumph in rising from the tomb. Christ, by His resurrection, has made death to us but an incident in a never-ending life, and sanctified for us the grave. The victory is ours. "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

751. Another consideration makes the idea of resurrection easier. God made Adam. He was not fashioned after any model. There had never been a human organism, and so there was nothing to copy. At the first attempt God made a perfect man. He made him out of the dust of the earth. If, out of ordinary dust of the earth and without a model, God could make a perfect man, surely out of the extraordinary dust of mortal body, and with millions of models, God can make each one of us a perfect being in the resurrection. Surely the last undertaking would not be

greater than the first. See the gospel algebra: Ordinary dust minus a model equals a perfect man. Extraordinary dust and plus a model equals a resurrection body. Mysteries about it? Oh, yes; that is one reason why I believe it. It would not be much of a God who could do things only as far as I can understand. Mysteries? Oh, yes; but no more about the resurrection of your body than about its present existence.—*T. DeWitt Talmage.*

752. "Where shall I go?" said a dying Hindoo to a Brahmin priest, to whom he had to give money to pay for salvation. 'Well, first of all, you will go into a holy quadruped.' 'But,' said the dying man, 'where shall I go then?' 'Into a beautiful flower.' He threw up his hand in an agony of solicitation: 'Where shall I go last of all?' The priest of Brahmin's hoary superstitions could not tell. Life and immortality had not been revealed to him. The Bible tells us where we shall go."

753. "A Hindoo fakir, with matted hair and ash-besmeared body, was sitting under a tree in deep meditation. His eyes fell on the leaves of a torn book which some one had tossed away. It was part of the New Testament. He smoothed out the crumpled pages, and read words which brought strange comfort to his hungry soul; they seemed to take him by the hand and lead him straight to the Father. Then he set out to seek for some one who obeyed the Book. He found an Englishman who confessed he obeyed it. The fakir, delighted, noticed that the Englishman wore a black band on his arm, and concluded that this was the distinctive sign of a Christian. So he put a black band on his own arm, and when people asked him who he was, he pointed to the band, and told them. Some time later the fakir wandered for the first time into a church building, and listened to a Christian preacher. At the close he announced that he, too, was a follower of this way, and pointed to the band as a proof. They explained that it was an English sign of the death of some loved friend. The fakir mused for a moment; then he answered: 'But I read in the Book that my loved one has died, and I shall wear it in memory of Him.' Before long, however, he grasped the truth of the resurrection, and when he realized that his loved one was alive for evermore, a great joy filled his heart. He took off

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the band from his arm, and the light of the resurrection shone in his face, and that became the sign."

754. "A workman of the great chemist Faraday one day knocked into a jar of acid a silver cup. It disappeared, was eaten up by the acid, and could not be found. The question came up whether it could ever be found. One said he could find it; another said it was held in solution, and it was impossible to find it. The great chemist came in, and put some chemical into the jar, and in a moment every particle of silver was precipitated to the bottom. He lifted it out a shapeless mass, sent it to the silversmith, and the cup was restored. If Faraday could restore that cup, I believe God can restore my sleeping and scattered dust."

755. The Romans had a practice of lighting up their tombs. It is recorded that fifteen hundred years after the death of Tullia, Cicero's daughter, her tomb, which was accidentally opened, was found illuminated with a lamp. It was but a glimmering light, the rays of which were confined to the catacomb walls; but the light which Christ sheds upon the grave falls upon the vista of eternity. You can now stoop, look in, and see immortality beyond. The grave which He entered was soon lit up with shining angels; and now He is gone. Gone where? To His Father and ours. He may be here, not twenty miles away, not twenty inches. "Lo, I am with you always." Faith peoples yonder churchyard with angels, and fills the air with songs.

"Tarry with me, O my Saviour; lay my head upon Thy breast
Till the morning: then awake me—morning of eternal rest."

—*Jacob Norris.*

756. "Christ is risen!" This is the song we shout, earth and heaven in one, on Easter day; with this we part from our loved ones; with this they answer us from the other land; with this we lay us down to rest; the echo of this we listen for from beyond the grave. There is, it is said, a beautiful custom in parts of Sicily when the fishermen are going on some expedition into the deep sea: their wives and children accompany them to the shore, and as they embark they raise all together their voices in a hymn of praise to God, and as they put out to sea those in the boats answer to those on the shore, in an antiphon of devo-

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tion, verse after verse, until their voices die away in the distance, and the yearning sea carries them out of sight and hearing. So we stand to-day on the shore of eternity, and as soul after soul puts forth into the deep, and passes from our sight, we raise the song of confidence, "Christ is risen," and the answer comes back from the bosom of that boundless ocean:

"Christ is risen, risen, brother;
Brother, Christ is risen indeed."

—*Canon Newbolt.*

757. "A century ago an infidel German countess, dying, ordered that her grave be covered with a solid granite slab; that around it should be placed blocks of stones, and that the whole be fastened together by strong iron clamps, and that on the stone be cut these words: 'This burial-place, purchased to all eternity, must never be opened.' Thus she defied the Almighty. But a little seed sprouted up under the covering, and the tiny shoot found its way through between two of the slabs, and grew there slowly and surely until it burst the clamps asunder, and, lifting the immense blocks, the structure ere long became a confused mass of rock, along which, in verdure and beauty, grew the great oak which had caused the destruction."

Bishop Fowler says of certain objections raised to the doctrine of the resurrection: "I am always reminded of the reply of the Cornish Methodist when one confronts us with such questions as these. He was told by a reputed scientific gentleman that it had been demonstrated that there was not sufficient phosphorus to supply bodies for those already dead, to say nothing about those who should come after. The old Cornish Christian answered that he did not know much about phosphorus, but he knew the Bible said the saints would rise first, consequently they would get all the phosphorus, and the remainder would get left."

758. It was the custom in our village to toll from the old church-bell the age of any one who died. Death never entered that village and tore away one of the inhabitants but I counted the tolling of that bell. Sometimes it was seventy, sometimes eighty; sometimes it would be away down among the teens; sometimes it would toll out the death of some one of my own age. It made a solemn impression upon me. I felt a coward

then. I thought of the cold hand of death feeling for the cords of life. I thought of being launched forth to spend my eternity in an unknown land. As I looked into the grave, and saw the sexton throw earth on the coffin-lid—"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust"—it seemed like the death-knell to my soul. But that is all changed now. The grave has lost its terror. As I go on towards heaven I can shout: "O death, where is thy sting?" And I hear the answer rolling down from Calvary: "Buried in the bosom of the Son of God."—*D. L. Moody.*

759. And so paper takes its origin from vile rags! The rag-dealer trudges on foot or drives his cart through the towns and villages, and his arrival is the signal for searching every corner and gathering every old and useless shred. These he takes to the mill, and there they are picked, washed, mashed, shaped, and sized—in short, formed into a fabric beautiful enough to venture into the presence of monarchs and princes. This reminds me of the resurrection of my mortal body. When deserted by the soul, I know not what better the body is than a worn and rejected rag. Accordingly, it is buried in the earth, and there gnawed by worms and reduced to dust and ashes. If, however, man's art and device can produce so pure and white a fabric as paper from filthy rags, what should hinder God by His mighty power to raise this vile body of mine from the grave, and refine and fashion it like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ?—*Gotthold.*

"RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD"

760. These words are quoted from 2 Tim. 2:15 (A. V.). The Revised Version gives a different translation. The whole passage reads thus: "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." In the margin there is still a different rendering: "Holding a straight course in the word of truth." The meaning is clearly this: In order for the minister of the gospel to obtain God's approval and have no reason to be ashamed of his work, he must be most careful in expounding the Word to give the sense according to the mind of God. Discrimination, or distinguishing things that differ, and pointing out

their true position, is in the Word rendered "dividing." Unless this is done, the reader or expounder becomes hopelessly confused. A few points will be sufficient to illustrate this. 1. It is of the first importance to get to know whether any given Scripture belongs to the covenant which God made with the Jews, or to us who live in the gospel age. 2. It is also important that we distinguish between those Scriptures which apply to God's faithful people and those that apply to the world. 3. It is also of great advantage to know whether any given Scripture was meant for particular persons, in special circumstances, or whether it is of general application. 4. We cannot be too careful in getting to know the special and particular sense of Holy Scripture. We may take it as an axiom that every Scripture has but one sense; that is, the author had a given meaning for every word, not a double meaning; and it is most important to get to know that meaning.

One of the most dangerous methods of "handling" the word of God is that of spiritualising portions that are plainly to be understood in their natural and obvious sense. This habit renders the word of God so as to become hopelessly confused. It makes it a riddle, and one man's guess is as good as another's. A safe rule is to take the natural and obvious sense always except where it is clear that a figurative sense is intended.

761. In reading the Scriptures, it is necessary to ask, "*Who speaks?*" The Bible is the word of God, but not all of its words are the words of God. In this book there are the words of the devil, of false prophets, and of sinners. In it may be found the opinions and decrees of men, as well as the counsel and command of God. Again enquire, "*To whom spoken?*" Is the message to a patriarch, a Jew, an apostle, a Christian, or a sinner? Does it belong to you, or only to the one to whom it was specially addressed? A third question will be helpful: "*Under what dispensation?*" Does the teaching belong to the patriarchal, Jewish, or Christian age? Just as we study the literature of the world with reference to, and in the light of, the times in which it was written, so must we do in our meditation on the Book of books. The fourth question is this: "*What purpose?*" There is no pointless argument or message in the teaching of the word of God. Each writer or speaker had a definite purpose before him.

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We can scarcely hope to understand the Scriptures unless we know what the purpose was. The purpose makes the teaching plain. The application of these four questions in our study of the oracles of God will solve many problems, answer many questions, explain many difficulties, fathom many mysteries, and throw a flood of light upon every page of the inspired volume.—*H. G. Harward.*

762. "A man in Burmah possessed a copy of the Psalms in Burmese, which had been left behind by a traveller stopping at his house. Before he had finished the first reading of the book he resolved to cast his idols away. For twenty years he worshipped the eternal God revealed to him in the Psalms, using the fifty-first, which he had committed to memory, as a daily prayer. Then a missionary appeared on the scene and gave him a copy of the New Testament. The story of salvation through Jesus Christ brought great joy to his heart, and he said: 'For twenty years I walked by starlight; now I see the sun.'"

763. More serious than the abuse heaped upon this book by its enemies is the fact that it is so frequently misused by its friends. The Bible is made responsible for all the "isms," fads, fancies, opinions, theories, and superstitions of the so-called Christian world. . . . Two men were fighting. The one man struck the other, at the same time quoting the words of Jesus: "Whosoever smiteth thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also." This was obligingly done. Then the second man hit back with all his power, saying as he did so: "Give, and it shall be given unto you." A man was reproved by a friend for swearing. He asked what wrong there was in that. "Don't you know," said the friend, "that you are breaking one of the commandments, 'Swear not at all'?" "But," replied the accused man, "I don't swear at *all*; I only swear at *some* people." In these illustrations we have the misuse of Scripture.—*H. G. Harward.*

764. The late Mr. Moody did not mind telling what might be regarded as against himself if it served to illustrate his point. In an address on Bible reading, he said that when a lad he had to hoe turnips on a farm, and often did his work so indifferently that he had to stick a piece of wood in the ground at night to

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show him next morning where he left off. This, he said, was like much reading of the Bible. The reader needs to turn down a leaf each time to indicate where he left off. Besides, it should not be haphazard reading—a chapter in Genesis to-day, a Psalm to-morrow, and a portion from Romans next day, and so forth. Some good may doubtless be got in that way, but not a tithe of what is obtainable from reading a book, or series of books, straight through.—*John McCartney.*

765. You don't need a railroad guide to learn to raise buckwheat. You don't read a cook-book to learn to shoe horses. You don't read an arithmetic to learn the history of the United States. A geography does not tell you about how to make buckwheat cakes. No, you read a railroad guide to learn about the trains, a cook-book to learn to make buckwheat cakes, an arithmetic for arithmetic, and a geography for geography. If you want to get out of a book what the author put in it, find out why it was written. That's the way to get good out of a book.—*Billy Sunday.*

766. Dr. Torrey says that whilst upon a sea voyage, he made a practise of studying each day a portion of the Scriptures. One of the passengers accosted him one day while studying, with the words: "Hullo, Doctor, getting up a sermon?" That, he said, he was afraid, was too frequently the case with ministers. They studied their Bibles only with a view to making sermons.

767. Here is God's House Beautiful. It is a palace. You may enter by simple faith, and you may ascend to its topmost story by simple obedience. It is a grandly furnished palace. It has in it a refectory, with milk for babes, with bread and strong meat for those who can assimilate such food, and with honey, sweet and delicious to the taste, and the water of life. He brings us to the banqueting-house, and His banner over us is love. . . . In that same Palace Beautiful there is a dormitory where the tired and worn pilgrim lies down as in a chamber of peace, and looks out through the window towards the sunrise, and beholds the delectable mountains, and refreshes himself for the toils and conflicts of another day. In that same blessed Palace Beautiful is God's gallery, where He has arranged before

us portraits of prophets, and saints, and martyrs, and apostles, and, above all, the immaculate portrait of the Son of God. In that same Palace Beautiful there is a conservatory where the very plants, and flowers, and fruits of the Celestial City may both be perceived and partaken of, and if by obedience you ascend the spiral staircase, you shall come last of all to the observatory, whose windows look out on celestial scenes themselves, and through the cloudless atmosphere you shall get a glimpse of the face of God.—*A. T. Pierson.*

SANCTIFICATION

768. At conversion, all must be surrendered to Christ—set apart for His use. Such self-surrender is sanctification. The tabernacle and all its articles of furniture were sanctified (Ex. 40:9, 10). In like manner Christians are set apart for God's service: "Sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" (1 Cor. 1:2).

It should be noted that sanctification is enjoined upon Christians, who already are represented as sanctified. In the Scripture just quoted, sanctification is alluded to as something already attained, whilst in 1 Thess. 5:23, Paul writes: "The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly." So that sanctification is a present possession, and yet a thing to be sought after.

To see how that is so, it must be remembered that, at conversion, a Christian is set apart to God. Sorrow for sin and pardon of sin are useless, minus a changed life. "From justification arises our title to heaven: from sanctification arises our meetness for heaven." No unholy person will be presented to Christ in glory. No unclean thing can enter the heavenly ark; so, sanctification is imperative. But the work is not completed in a moment. Conversion may be sudden, but to become wholly sanctified is a gradual process; there should be a daily growing in grace; a steady but sure advance, until all that we are and have be wholly set apart for the Master's use.

How can the work of sanctification be accomplished? By becoming "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). The cultivation of our own natures, unaided by the Holy Spirit, will

result in utter failure. From the great fountain of holiness must flow the crystal stream into our own lives, until we become possessed, in full measure, of the "divine nature," and are at one with God.

769. Progress in sanctification may, in fact, be going on when you don't see it; perhaps when it seems going back. Take comfort! "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." . . . Like a patient who, through the power of returning life, begins to feel and complain of his pains, when we think we are growing worse, we may actually be growing better, and making no little progress when we seem to be making none. Be not cast down! Progression is the ordinary law of God's government. It is star by star that the hosts of night march out; it is minute by minute that morn's grey dawn brightens up into perfect day; it is ring by ring that the oak grows into the monarch of the forest; it is inch by inch and foot by foot that the tide, which bears navies on its bosom, comes creeping in on the shore. And not, like justification, an act, our sanctification, being a work of God's free grace, is under the same law of progress. More or less rapid, it is a thing of steps and stages.—*Guthrie*.

770. A man may, in a fit of passion, strike his fellow; he commits a crime by doing so: he is punishable, and may be thrown into prison for that breach of law. He has remained there a certain time, and the prison doors are opened before him; he walks out and there is no more in the law to detain him. He has satisfied the law; but when the man comes out from prison, he is not a whit better fitted for society than before he went in; he brings out all the bad passions with him that he took in; the man is justified, but he wants sanctifying. I can imagine some one going into hell itself, and putting out the flames, but would that make the persons in hell happy? No. There is a fire within that must be put out; and "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."—*Beaumont*.

771. Mr. Meyer says that he was one time paying a pastoral visit to a poor washerwoman who had just gotten out a line

of clothes. He congratulated her because they looked so white. Pleased with her pastor's kind words, she invited him to take a cup of tea. While they were sitting at tea the sky clouded and there was a snowstorm, and, as he came out, the white snow lay everywhere about, and he said to her: "Your washing does not look quite so clean as it did." "Ah!" she said, "the washing is right enough, but what can stand against God Almighty's white?"

772. In South Africa, in looking for diamonds, they often find a substance that is half charcoal and half diamond. It was intended to be a diamond, but it stopped short, and it is only diamondiferous: it is partly a cinder and partly a jewel. It stopped short, and will never get into the king's crown. Don't be content to be sprinkled on one part with diamond and the other part with slag.—*W. Hetherington.*

773. A fine illustration of the worth of a sanctified life has been seen recently in a teacher in one of the Government schools of Japan. His contract was that he was not to teach Christianity—not to proselyte—and, so far as words were concerned, he kept it faithfully. But all the while his life was so blameless and beautiful that it did the work without words. As evidence of this, forty of the students, without his knowledge, met in a grove secretly, and signed a covenant to forsake idolatry—for the religion of their teacher. And some of them are now preaching the gospel in their native land.

"Be noble! and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."

774. I do not know that a better definition of holiness could possibly be given than was once given by an unlearned, ignorant, poor man, a candidate for the post of missionary. The examining minister had asked him to define justification, and he had done it to his satisfaction. Then his examiner said: "Now, my brother, what is sanctification?" The answer was a memorable one; it will be worth while to carry it away. "Sanctification, sir, is a God-possessed soul."—*E. W. Moore.*

775. It is said that when hunters want to catch the ermine, the animal which produces the beautiful fur, they put mud all round about its hole, and then, rather than defile its fur, it will allow itself to be caught or killed. Oh that men and women would rather die than defile their souls and sin against God!

776. "You go to the photographer's to get your photo taken. You are put into position; then the camera is adjusted, the sun strikes upon the lens and the sensitised plate, the cap is lifted off, and you are taken in a moment. But it takes some time before the photograph is developed. The likeness is imprinted upon the sensitised plate, but there is the dark room, the acid bath and other processes to be gone through before the photograph is ready. And conversion is the work of a moment, but there is the work of sanctification to be done. There will be, perhaps, dark rooms, acid baths and other things: God only knows; but don't let us shirk them. The day is coming when the image of Jesus Christ will stand out clear and bold in the Christian soul."

777. How often a girl, growing up into the fulness of her mature young womanhood, calls out the remark: "You are growing more and more like your mother." And the similar remark is heard of a young man developing the traits and features of his father. There is a law of unconscious assimilation. We become like those with whom we go. Without being conscious of it, we take on the characteristics of those with whom we live. I remember one time my brother returned home for a visit after a prolonged absence. As we were walking down the street together he said to me: "You have been going with Denning a good deal"—a mutual friend of ours. Surprised, I said: "How do you know I have?" He said, "You walk just like him." What my brother had said was strictly true, though, of course, he did not know it. Our friend Denning had a very decided way of walking. As a matter of fact, he and I had been walking home together from the Young Men's Christian Association three or four nights every week. And unconsciously I had grown to imitate his way of walking.
—*S. D. Gordon.*

SECTARIANISM

778. A few years ago, sectarianism was boldly defended. It is gratifying to know that, at last, Christendom is fairly unanimous in the view that sectarianism is an evil. It is believed that it has greatly weakened the energies of Christian people. Enthusiasm which should have been spent in the infinitely greater work of striving to save the world, has been devoted to internal disputes upon doctrinal differences. Instead of being, as it was believed, battalions of one great army, the sects of Christendom have been engaged in contending against each other. It is now recognised that there has been inexcusable wastage in time, energy, and money, and that the sectarian spirit is contrary to the mind of Christ and His apostles. "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20, 21). "It hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them which are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:11-13). Whilst the evil of sectarianism is now being recognised, there is a well-nigh universal hope that the day will come when God's people shall be one, even as Jesus is one with the Father.

Should such a day dawn, a great point of the enemies' attack will be removed, and "the world may believe" in Jesus as its Saviour.

Our Lord's prayer for union could be answered at once, if all His followers would give up whatever is of human authority, and unite upon the seven units of Eph. 4:4-6: "One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all."

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

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779. Sectarianism has been the bane of the church. Multiplied divisions have weakened her energies. A vast amount of zeal and power which should have been brought to bear on the conversion of the world has been expended in assailing and defending the several points on which the Christian community has been split into fragments. Christendom has often resembled a battlefield, in which the several detachments of the same army, instead of combining in one aggressive movement against the common foe, have raised the shout of war against each other. The enemy, meanwhile, has exulted at the sight, and not only been fortified in the belief that Christianity is a profession under which men drive low and selfish designs; but has strengthened his position in defying the armies of the living God.—*T. Pierson.*

780. It is of more consequence to a sectarian to defend a prejudice than to rejoice over a recovered man. The Pharisees hated Christ, and what good can a hated man do? They hesitated not to trace a good effect to a bad cause.—*Dr. Parker.*

781. "I pray you," said Luther, "leave my name alone, and do not call yourselves Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I was not crucified for any one. Paul would not that any should call themselves of Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How, then, does it fit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease to cling to these party names and distinctions! Away with them, and let us call ourselves Christians, after Him from whom our doctrine comes!"

782. He knows very little of mankind who expects, by any facts or reasoning, to convince a *determined party man*.—*Lavater.*

783. Party spirit is in the church when the Christian fights harder for a sectarian triumph than for the reign of the Lord. There are some members of the Christian church who are never to be found on the battlefield except when the struggle is an unfortunate contest between the Christian sects. They revel in sectarian strife. A fight stirs them to the depths. Some election will find them on the field, but the declaration of the poll marks the movement of their retirement, and they are not to be found

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in the ranks when the immediate contest is the incessant fight with all the powers of ill. I say that is the party spirit the apostle deplotes: the spirit which enlists for a sect, but not for the Lord; which works feverishly for a sectarian victory, and is inclined to forget the august interests of our God.—*J. H. Jowett.*

784. Melancthon mourned in his day the divisions among Protestants, and sought to bring the Protestants together by the parable of the war between the wolves and the dogs. The wolves were somewhat afraid, for the dogs were many and strong, and therefore they sent out a spy to observe them. On his return, the scout said: "It is true the dogs are many, but there are not many mastiffs among them. There are dogs of so many sorts one can hardly count them; and as for the worst of them," said he, "they are little dogs, which bark loudly, but cannot bite. However, this did not cheer me so much," said the wolf, "as this, that, as they came marching on, I observed they were all snapping right and left at one another, and I could see clearly that though they all hate the wolf, yet each dog hates every other dog with all his heart." I fear it is true still; for there are many professors who snap right and left at their own brethren, when they had better save their teeth for the wolves. If our enemies are to be put to confusion, it must be by the united efforts of all the people of God. Unity is strength.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

785. A traveller found his path through a precipitous ravine blocked by an immense rock, which, with the greatest effort of his strength, he could not move. He sat down helpless in despair. Others came along the same road, and each, in his turn, drawing together, they besought Heaven to aid them. But no voice replied; no angel appeared to roll away the stone. And then, as if inspired, one asked: "May we not succeed together where we failed alone?" Before their united strength the barrier yielded and left the way open.—*Lammenais.*

786. Mr. W. Alexander says: "I recollect once to have driven upon an Irish jaunting-car with a little child about four years of age. It began to rain, and a hood was placed over the child's head. I heard her mutter: 'There is a pretty view!' I

said: 'How can that be when your head is covered?' 'Oh!' she replied, 'I see my knees, my shawl, and my pretty, pretty little feet.' Now, I think that a good illustration of the way in which some people praise and admire their own views; but, after all, their admiration arises from the fact that their heads are muffled, and that they cannot look farther than the extremities of their own beautiful selves." To this we may add that the sectarian outlook is frequently as circumscribed: hence, complacency with one's own views, etc. An enlarged outlook is imperative, if sectarianism is to cease.

787. As the spokes in a wheel become nearer to each other as they approach the centre, so may we be drawn nearer to Christ, our common centre, and into closer union with each other.—*J. Wood.*

788. "It is common in Africa," says Moffat, "for the serpents to ascend the trees and take the young birds and eggs from their nests. You will then see birds collect together, of different hues, different characters, and different sizes, from the water-wagtail to the hawk, all assembling to scream and to roar—however these birds hated each other before, they now unite together, showing they are all in earnest to get the serpent to descend." So, when the great war was declared in 1914, political controversies which threatened to create civil war were forgotten in a united effort to "destroy the enemy."

789. It is said, in a book of Sir Samuel Baker, that when he was far up the Nile they were looking for a time when the river was to come down. Everywhere there were little pools, and some animals were disporting themselves in these little pools—all separate pools; but there they were, and they were waiting for the coming of the Nile. They heard the noise like the noise of thunder. Down came the waters some twenty feet in depth, pushing on and mightily prevailing, and the pools were all lost. The hippopotami and other creatures came out from the little pools, and were disporting themselves in the great river everywhere. We want the coming down of God's blessed river, *so that our little pools may, to a large extent, be lost sight of*, and that we may come forth by the power of this living water, and

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find ourselves there in the fulness of blessing unto the glory of God, no longer standing aloof, but all with the same stream, and all possessed of the same blessing.—*Dr. Brown.*

SIN

790. Sin is the transgression of God's law. "Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4). Through sin, angels left their proper habitation (Jude 6) and man was banished from paradise (Gen. 3:23, 24), the curse and its punishment resting upon him and his descendants. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin: and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned" (Rom. 5:12). "There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one" (Rom. 3:12).

Sin is the only thing which God abhors. All sins, great or small, are to God objects of intense aversion.

Nothing speaks louder concerning God's hatred of sin than Calvary. Surely, he who asserts that sin is a trivial thing, a mere "ripple on the ocean of God's love," has never looked upon the cross! In view of what it cost to atone for it, sin is heinous, hellish, damnable. It required nothing less than the humiliation of the Son of God, even to the death of the cross. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin in our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). "What words, what thought shall be adequate to realise these facts? The righteous He made a sinner, that He might make the sinners righteous! Yea, far greater—He made Him *sin*, that sinners might be made *the very righteousness of God*, which we are when we are justified by grace, in which case all sin is done away."

791. You cannot escape yourself. Go where you will, you carry with you a soul degraded, its power lost, its finer sensibilities destroyed. Worse than the viper's tooth is the punishment of no longer striving after goodness or aspiring after the life of God. Just as the man cannot see through the glass on

which he breathes, sin darkens the windows of the soul. You cannot look out, even to know the glories of the fair world from which your soul excludes itself. There is no punishment equal to the punishment of being base. To sink from sin to sin, from infamy to infamy—that is the fearful retribution which is executed in the spiritual world.—*F. W. Robertson.*

792. The poet sings of his brave soldier friend:

“The hottest engagement he ever was in,
Was the conquest of self in the battle of sin.”

—*Matilda Erickson.*

793. Sin is a clenched fist—and a blow in the face of God.—*Jos. Parker.*

794. Dr. J. W. Chapman says that his old college president came to him one day and said: “I question if New York will ever be stirred; I question if men will ever be aroused from their indifference; I question if men will ever feel their need of a Saviour—until we get back to the old days when we preach the exceeding evil of sin.”

795. Suppose a man should come to a table and there is a knife laid at his trencher, and it should be told him: “This is the knife that cut the throat of your child, or your father;” if he could now use that knife as any other knife, would not one say, “Surely there was but little love either to the father or to the child”? So, when there is a temptation to any sin, this is the knife that cut the throat of Christ, that pierced His side, that was the cause of His sufferings, that made Christ to be a curse. Now, wilt thou not look on that as a cursed thing that made Christ to be a curse? Oh, with what detestation would a man or woman fling away such a knife! And with the like detestation it is required that a man should renounce sin: for that, and that only, was the cause of the death of Christ.—*Alphonsus ab Avendano.*

796. Betty, aged six, is something of a philosopher. The other day, as she slowly and painstakingly worked at the strip of hemming which was her first attempt at needlework, she thought—

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fully remarked: "The best thing about not putting in crooked stitches is that you don't have to pick 'em out again." How many bitter hours we spend in picking out life's crooked stitches that we never should have put in.—*Emma C. Fisk.*

797. Two theological students, walking down a street in London, suddenly stopped before a shop window where hung a suit of clothes. The tag read: "Slightly soiled: greatly reduced in price." "That's it exactly," began the first observer; "we young people get soiled slightly, seeing a vulgar show in a theatre, reading a coarse book, allowing ourselves a little indulgence in dishonesty, or lustful thoughts; just slightly soiled; and so, when the time comes for our manhood to be appraised, we are 'greatly reduced in price.'"—*Matilda Erickson.*

798. Gough's bitter cry was: "The scars remain! The scars remain! Scars never to be eradicated: never to be removed in this life. I have been plucked as a brand from the burning, but the scar of the fire is upon me."

799. George Macdonald, with a very tender, but telling, touch, tells, in "Wilfred Cumbermede," the following conversation: "Do you know, Wilfred, I once shot a little bird, for no good, but just to shoot at something. I knew it was wrong, yet I drew the trigger. It dropped, a heap of ruffled feathers. I shall never get that little bird out of my head. And the worst of it is that, to all eternity, I can never make any atonement." "But God will forgive you, Charlie." "What do I care for that," he replied, almost fiercely, "when the little bird cannot forgive me?" "Wreckage in life is not always confined to a heap of ruffled feathers."

800. A friend once asked an aged man what it was that caused him so often to complain of pain and weariness in the evening. "Alas!" said he, "I have every day so much to do, for I have two falcons to tame, two hares to keep from running away, two hawks to manage, a serpent to confine, a lion to chain, and a sick man to tend and wait upon." "Why, you must be joking," said his friend; "surely no man can have all these

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things to do at once." "Indeed, I am not joking," said the old man, "but what I have told you is the sad and sober truth; for the two falcons are my two eyes, which I must diligently guard lest something should please them which may be hurtful to my salvation; the two hares are my feet, which I must hold back lest they should run after evil objects, and walk in the ways of sin; the two hawks are my two hands, which I must train and keep to work in order that I may be able to provide for myself and for my brethren who are in need; the serpent is my tongue, which I must always keep in with a bridle lest it should speak anything unseemly; the lion is my heart, with which I have to maintain a continual fight in order that the grace of God may dwell and work there; the sick man is my whole body, which is needing my watch and care."

801. A little newsboy, to sell his paper, told a lie. The matter came up in the Sunday school. "Would you tell a lie for a penny?" asked a teacher of one of the boys. "No, ma'am," replied Dick, very decidedly. "For a shilling?" "No, ma'am." "For a sovereign?" Dick was staggered. A sovereign looked big. "Oh, would it not buy lots of things?" While he was thinking, another boy behind him roared out, "No, ma'am." "Why not?" asked the teacher. "Because when the sovereign was all gone, and the things got with it gone too, the lie is there all the same," answered the boy.

802. One who sins only a very little may be much more dangerous to others than one who sins a great deal. A little tolerated sin in the apostle Paul would have been a greater menace to the church and the world than was the gross sin of Judas Iscariot. The more nearly right we are, the more dangerous are our divergences from the right. A clock that is five minutes out of the way is a much more misleading timepiece than a clock that is five hours wrong. This fact does not mean that gross sinners are better or safer citizens than those who sin less; but it does mean that one who has been led out by God on to a high plane of life is peculiarly useful to Satan if he is led into seemingly trifling sin. The more steadfast we live in consecrated obedience, the more disastrous

in poisoning effect upon others is our yielding to any sin.—*S. S. Times.*

803. A rich landlord once cruelly oppressed a poor widow. Her son, a little boy of eight years, saw it. He afterwards became a painter, and painted a life-likeness of the dark scene. Years afterwards he placed it where the man saw it; he turned pale, trembled in every joint, and offered any sum to purchase it that he might put it out of sight. Thus, there is an invisible painter drawing on the canvas of the soul a life-likeness reflecting correctly all the passions and actions of our spiritual history on earth. Eternity will reveal them to every man. We must meet our earth-life again.

804. Rowland Hill once began his sermon by saying: "My friends, the other day I was going down the street, and I saw a drove of pigs following a man. This excited my curiosity so much that I determined to follow. I did so; and, to my great surprise, I saw them follow him to the slaughter-house. I was anxious to know how this was brought about; and I said to the man: 'My friend, how did you manage to induce those pigs to follow you here?' 'Oh! did you not see?' said the man. 'I had a basket of beans under my arm; and I dropped a few as I came along, and so they followed me.' Yes," said the preacher, "and I thought, so it is; the devil has his basket of beans under his arm, and he drops them as he goes along, and what multitudes he induces to follow him to an everlasting slaughter-house! Yes, friends, and all your broad and crowded thoroughfares are strewn with the beans of the devil."

805. A boy eighteen years of age said in my presence: "Why, these missionaries are breakin' up our business." "What is your business?" "Well, me an' my mates, we haven't got no character, so we has to get a livin', an' we steals; we thieves; but the missionaries have been about breakin' up our business." "How?" "Well, sir, *they've been tellin' of us that God Almighty sees us*, an' I tell you, sir, when I get my hand in a gentleman's pocket an' I think God is lookin' at me, it takes all the pluck out of me, an' I never steals now, unless I'm starvin'."—*J. B. Gough.*

SOUL-WINNING

806. When our Lord chose His first disciples, He sent them forth to be "fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). To His apostles He gave the great commission: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). The early Christians "that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4), so that, it is said, "within one hundred years after the crucifixion, the number of Christians throughout the Roman Empire was held to amount to a tenth of the entire population."

The same work is committed to us. Soul-winning is the church's greatest mission. Nothing is more pleasing to God, or helpful to man.

Yet this work is more often neglected than done. Many seem to be of the opinion that when they are converted, everything is finished. In reality, their work has only commenced. Having experienced the Saviour's redeeming love, the convert should long to get into personal touch with others, striving to lead them to Christ.

There would be much more work of this nature done if the worth of a soul was considered. Theo. T. Munger says: "Man is the only jewel; there is no true gold but him on this planet. Why does man pass by man and go after something that glitters, or stretches wide, or reaches high?"

In soul-winning, great tact and wisdom are needed. "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30). "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).

Above all, it must be remembered that love is the secret of success in soul-winning. It is said that "men are like ice; you can melt them sooner by being warm toward them, by centring the rays of a great, earnest, glowing love upon them, than by going at them with hammers of threat and warning, and trying to beat them down and pulverize them."

807. In Harold Begbie's "Twice-born Men" is found the following: "I want to insist, at the threshold of my essay, on this singular and beautiful characteristic which, as I say, divinely differentiates Christianity from all other religions under the

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sun: Christianity saves the lost. No other religion does this. Christianity is not only sublimely different from all other world religions because of the miracles it performs, but because of the desire it implants in the human soul for the reclamation of sinners. There is in every other religion either horror or contempt for the vile and dissolute. In Christianity there is nothing but compassion. Other religions wait for men to seek them, Christianity seeks men and dies directly it ceases to seek."

808. In an address on soul-winning, C. R. Scoville gave the following illustrations: "An honourable man approached Dr. Lyman Beecher in his old age, and said, 'Doctor, you have lived a long time and have seen and known many things; what do you consider the main thing?' And the old veteran replied: 'It is not theology; it is not controversy; it is the saving of souls.'

"The last sentence of the great evangelist, Knowles Shaw, was, 'Oh, it is glorious to rally souls to the cross.'

"One conversation of Dean Hook, walking through the park arm in arm with a young man, saved Samuel Wilberforce, and liberated the slaves of the British Empire.

"'The longer I live,' said H. W. Beecher, 'the more confidence I have in those sermons where one man is the minister and one man is the congregation; where there is no question as to who is meant; where the preacher says, "Thou art the man;" the gospel, like sunshine, is scarcely noticed when it falls broadly, but concentrated on one spot, it soon burns.'

"One has said: 'The church needs not more men, but man;' Dr. Dixon says: 'The church evangelical is the church on ice; and the church evangelistic is the church on fire.'

"The Christian, like a telephone, must be a receiver and a transmitter. With ear open to the Infinite and life insulated from the world, he must transmit the glorious gospel of the Son of God to the unsaved millions. We are heirs of the ages, and also trustees of the future."

809. "Tommy, the stutterer, could not speak a sentence plainly. He was nevertheless a successful soul-winner. During revival meetings you might see Tommy in the corner with his Bible, pointing some sinner to God, and soon the sinners would be rejoicing. One of the ministers said: 'Tommy, how do you

manage? You can't speak plain, and yet you lead so many to Christ. How is it?' Said he: 'Doc—Doctor, I give 'em the Bi-Bi-ble. That don't stutter.' That is it. Use the Word. In all our work use the Word. 'That don't stutter,' and will reach people, when stammering or eloquent language will fail."

810. "In soul-saving, tact is necessary. A criminal under sentence of death was waiting the day of execution. A minister attended him. All efforts to lead him to repentance seemed unavailing. Going home, he met a man who was known all over the district for his life and good works. The conversation turned upon the criminal. The minister requested the elder to go and see him. He did so, and, sitting beside the criminal, he took his hand in his, and said, with much fervour and simplicity: 'Wasn't it great love in God to send His Son into the world to die for sinners like you and me?' In a moment, the fountain of the man's heart was broken up, and he wept bitter tears, and afterwards said: 'When the minister spoke to me, it seemed like one standing far above me, but when the good man came in and sat down by my side, and classed himself with me, and said, "Wasn't it great love in God to send His Son into the world to die for sinners like you and me?" I couldn't stand it any longer.'"

811. "An incident is related which occurred during Mr. Finney's meetings in New York City, and which will illustrate the value of a little tact in the great struggle for souls. The big cutlery firm of Sheffield, England, had a branch house in New York. The manager was a partner of the firm, and very worldly. One of his clerks, who had been converted in the meetings, invited his employer to attend. One evening he was there and sat across the aisle from Mr. Arthur Tappan. He appeared affected during the sermon, and Mr. Tappan kept his eye on him. After the dismissal, Mr. Tappan stepped quickly across the aisle, introduced himself, and invited him to stay to the after-service. The gentleman tried to excuse himself and get away, but Mr. Tappan caught hold of the button on his coat and said, 'Now, do stay: I know you will enjoy it!' and he was so kind and gentlemanly that the cutlery man could not well refuse. He stayed and was led to Christ. Afterwards he said:

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'An ounce of weight upon my coat-button saved my soul.' More 'buttonhole Christians' are needed."

812. Several years ago, just outside my old home in Armadale, Melbourne, some men were working underground. Suddenly a cry of agony was heard. All hastened outside. They found that the earth had fallen in, entombing two of the men. Hundreds of people gathered around—the wives, children, and friends of the workmen. The men worked hard, and rescued one. He was well-nigh stifled; almost completely exhausted; but, instead of resting awhile, he got hold of a pickaxe and helped other men in the work of trying to rescue his companion. Hours passed away. My people told me that they could not restrain the tears as they beheld the face of that man and heard his cry, every now and then: "Tom, Tom, are you there?" Others gave up hope, but that man worked on till sunset, and, at last, found the dead body of his companion, hanging to a rafter several feet below. With like earnestness should we seek to save the lost.

813. "They that *turn* many," etc. (Dan. 12:3). As if a man were going the wrong way on a dangerous road. And I *know* it's the wrong way. There's a sharp precipice ahead. But he is going steadily on, head down, all absorbed, not noticing where the road leads. I might go up to him, and strike him sharply on the shoulder to get his attention, and say, "See here, you're going the wrong way; can't you see the danger ahead there? Come this way," with a vigorous pull. I have sometimes seen that done in just that way. And if the man is an American, or an Englishman, or a German—we're all very much alike—he will say, coldly: "Excuse me, I think I can take care of myself. Thank you. I'll look out for this individual." Or, I might slip gently up to the man, and get my arm in his, and begin to turn, very gently at first, and turn, and turn, and then turn some more, and then farther around still, and walk him off the other way. . . . I can tell you this: the old world where you and I live is fairly hungry at its heart, with an eating hunger for turners of that sort.—S. D. Gordon.

814. A stranger once approached a lighthouse-keeper, and said: "How do you save the lighthouse during a storm?" The

keeper promptly replied: "I am not here to save lighthouses, but to save ships."

"Thou must save another's soul, if thou wouldst save thine own,
For heaven's door is closed to him who comes alone."

—C. R. Scoville.

815. "Many years ago an English traveller was visiting Rome. His eyes were on the lookout for treasures everywhere, but especially in the untrodden ways of the average tourist. One day, while lingering amid the ruins of an old palace, he noticed an Italian peasant anxiously examining a little stone rescued from the ruins. Drawing near, he also became interested, and at a venture he offered five dollars for it, which was gladly and promptly accepted. The Englishman took it to his room and examined it, with the aid of an expert, and found it to be the world-famous topaz which once dazzled in the crown of Cæsar Augustus, and was worth two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Its beauty and worth had been obscured by dirt and filth, but it had not been destroyed. But the soul of man, however sunk in sin, is worth more than all the gems in the world; and may it be our happy lot to discover some of them."

816. As we were driving, and talking, by and by, in a little lull of the talk, my friend said very quietly: "Gordon, do you know what I have been doing lately?" And I said: "No." "Well," he said, "it's been the delight of my life," and I could see the gleam of light in his eyes. And I said: "Tell me what it is that has been such a pleasure to you." And he said: "Well, I will." He said that when he was at home—he travelled much—he would think about the young men whom he knew who were not Christians. Splendid men, some of them, full of power; clubmen, some of them; but who did not know Jesus personally. And he would think: "Now, there's such a man. I wonder what's his easy side of approach." And he would think about him, and pray some about him, and then make an opportunity to ask him up to his home for dinner some evening. His position in the city would make any young man feel honoured with such an invitation. He said to me: "We have a pleasant time at the dinner-table with the family, and, afterwards, a bit of music and so on. Then," with a quiet smile he said, "I ask him into

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my library corner, my little study den, and by and by we come to close quarters. I tell him what I'm thinking about. I tell him what a friend Jesus is, and how it helps to have Him in all of one's life, as a Friend and Master. Then I ask him softly if he won't let Jesus be his friend." He said: "I try to be as tactful as though I were selling a contract of cars. . . . Gordon, it's been the *delight* of my life to have man after man accept Jesus in my library corner." I was telling this story one night to some people in this State, and as the audience was dismissed, I saw a man coming up the aisle toward the pulpit, apparently to meet me. He *gripped* my hand. I can feel that grip now. And he half blurted out: "*I'm* one of those fellows! And there are a lot of us that are thanking God with full hearts for that man's library room."—*S. D. Gordon.*

817. "What shall I do for Christ?" asked a young disciple of Bishop Selwyn. "Go where He is not, and take Him with you," was the venerable bishop's reply.

818. "Bishop Tucker, of Uganda, was in early manhood an artist, and exhibited at the Royal Academy. The call to the ministry came to him in a remarkable way. One day he was painting a picture of a poor woman, struggling with a baby in her arms against a storm of sleet, with every door shut against her, and the thought came into his mind that, instead of painting pictures about the poor, it would be far better to do something to help them. At once he dedicated himself to God. After a course in Oxford University, and a term spent in work among the slums in England, he proceeded to Uganda as a missionary, reaching that land in 1890. After twenty-one years of service, he retired, leaving a church of seventy thousand members."

THE HOLY SPIRIT

819. All we know of the Holy Spirit is revealed in the Bible, of which He Himself is the author. Therein we learn that He moved (brooded) over the face of the waters which covered the whole earth, prior to the six days' work of creation (Gen. 1:2). After the fall He spoke through holy men, revealing the mind and will of God (2 Pet. 1:21). All the patriarchs,

prophets, seers, and sacred scribes were under His direct influence. The Lord Jesus Christ was filled and wholly directed by the Spirit. The apostles of Christ were promised, and afterwards received, the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth and bring to their minds all the instruction that Jesus had imparted to them, during His earthly ministry (John 14:25-27). By means of the truth thus revealed, the Holy Spirit converts the sinner and sanctifies the child of God. He dwells in the Christian and sheds the love of God abroad in his heart (Rom. 5:5). The child of God is "led by the Spirit," "quickened by the Spirit," "lives in the Spirit," "walks by the Spirit." The Spirit "seals him unto the day of redemption," gives him an "earnest" of his future inheritance, and fills him with "joy" and "comfort" in believing.

The Holy Spirit is "grieved" when His benign influence is "resisted." To so act is a most awful and dangerous sin. He will "not always strive with men"; but will leave the rejectors to their doom. To blaspheme against the Spirit is an unpardonable sin (Matt. 3:29). "Of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:29). Those who come fully under the beneficent influence of God's Holy Spirit receive the fulness and richness of God's grace. Those who despise and reject that influence expose themselves thereby to the most awful of God's judgments.

820. The Spirit is not promised to any persons out of Christ. It is promised only to them that believe in and obey Him. These it actually and powerfully assists in the mighty struggle for eternal life. Some, indeed, ask: "Do Christians need more aid to gain eternal life than sinners do to become Christians? Is not the work of conversion a more difficult work than the work of sanctification?" Hence, they contend more for the work of the Spirit in conversion, than for the work of the Spirit in sanctification. This, indeed, is a mistaken view of the matter, if we reason either from analogy or from divine testimony. Is it not more easy to plant than to cultivate the corn, the vine, the olive? Is it not more easy to enlist in the army than to be a

good soldier, and fight the battles of the Lord; to start in the race than to reach the goal; to enter the ship than cross the ocean; to enter into the matrimonial compact than to be an exemplary husband; to enter into life than to retain and sustain it for threescore years and ten? And, while the commands "believe," "repent," and "be baptized," are never accompanied with any intimation of peculiar difficulty, the commands to the use of the means of spiritual health and life, to form the Christian character, to attain the resurrection of the just, to lay hold on eternal life, to make our calling and election sure, etc., are accompanied with such exhortations, admonitions, cautions, as to make it a difficult and critical affair, requiring all the aids of the Spirit of our God, to all the means of grace and untiring assiduity and perseverance on our part, for, it seems, "the called" who enter the stadium are many, while "the chosen" and approved "are few"; and "many," says Jesus, "shall seek to enter into the heavenly city, and shall not be able." "Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."—*Alexander Campbell*.

821. Mr. Moody, taking in his hand a tumbler, explained that it was full of air, and that it was almost impossible to remove that air. In the same way the human heart is full of sin, and our efforts to remove it are unsuccessful. Seizing a pitcher of water from the table, he filled the tumbler so full of the liquid that it overflowed to the platform. There was no longer any air left in the tumbler. His moral was that when a human heart is filled to overflowing with God's Spirit, there is no room for sin in that heart.—*Tyler E. Gale*.

822. One morning with a friend I walked out of the city of Geneva to where the waters of the lake flow with swift rush into the Rhone. And we were both greatly interested in the strange sight which has impressed so many travellers. There are two rivers whose waters come together here—the Rhone and the Arve, the Arve flowing into the Rhone. The waters of the Rhone are beautifully clear and sparkling. The waters of the Arve come through a clayey soil and are muddy, grey, and dull. And for a long distance the two waters are wholly distinct. Two rivers of water are in one river-bed; on one side the

sparkling, blue Rhone waters; on the other, the dull grey Arve water, and the line between the two sharply defined. And so it continues for a long distance. Then gradually they blend and the grey begins to tinge all through the blue. I went to the guide-book and maps to find out something about this river that kept on its way undefiled by its neighbour for so long. Its source is in a glacier that is between ten thousand and eleven thousand feet high, descending "from the gates of eternal night, at the foot of the pillar of the sun." It is fed continually by the melting glacier, which, in turn, is being kept up by the snows and cold. Rising at this great height, ever being renewed steadily by the glacier, it comes rushing down the swift descent of the Swiss Alps, through the lake of Geneva, and on. There is the secret of purity, side by side with its dirty neighbour. Our lives must have their source high up in the mountains of God, fed by a ceaseless supply. Only so can there be purity, and the momentum that shall keep us pure, and keep us *moving*, down in contact with men of the earth. And we must keep closer to the source than is the Rhone at Geneva, else the streams flowing alongside will unduly influence us.—*S. D. Gordon.*

823. Suppose we saw an army sitting down before a granite fort, and they told us that they intended to batter it down; we might ask them, "How?" They point to a cannon-ball—well, but there is no power in that: it is heavy, but not more than half a hundred, or, perhaps, a hundred weight; if all the men in the army hurled it against the fort, they would make no impression. They say, "No, but look at the cannon." Well, there is no power in that; a child may ride upon it, a bird may perch in its mouth; it is a machine, and nothing more. "But look at the powder." Well, there is no power in that; a child may spill it, a sparrow may peck it. Yet this powerless powder and powerless ball are put into the powerless cannon: one spark of fire enters it, and then, in the twinkling of an eye, that powder is a flash of lightning, and that ball a thunderbolt, which smites as if it had been sent from heaven. So it is with our church machinery at this day; we have all the instruments necessary for pulling down strongholds, but oh for the baptism of fire!—*W. Arthur.*

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824. Bishop Warren says: "I was in an electric car one day, and it quickly stopped. The conductor looked up to the wire, and said, 'Lost the power.' Ah, how true! There was plenty in the wire above, but the upraised finger did not touch it." To be effective for service, we must be in connection with the source of power. Some thoughts and some ways of living break such a connection. There is no use trying to work for God when we have "lost the power."

825. They have a custom, in the villages on the Rhine, of anchoring a grist-mill in the middle of the river, where the current is strongest, and making the rapids grind the food of the whole community. So, let any man plant himself in the mid-stream of God's plans, and take earnest grip at the thing that first comes to hand, working with a will at it; and the current of eternal decree will impart its own momentum to his work, so that it will grow into grand achievement.—*Dr. Austin Phelps.*

826. Mr. J. R. Miller tells of a perfumer who bought a common earthen jar and filled it with attar of roses. Soon every particle of the substance of the jar was filled with the rich perfume, and long afterwards, and even when broken, the fragments retained the fragrance. So it is that a human life becomes filled, saturated with the word of God, when one loves it and meditates upon it continually. The thoughts, feelings, affections, dispositions, and the whole character become coloured with the spirit of the Word. Such a filling of the heart and memory with the pure word of God is the best way to prepare for any future of darkness into which the life may pass. It is like hanging up a hundred lamps, while the light of day yet shines, to be ready to pour down their soft beams the moment the daylight fades. The Spirit-filled life is one of trust. There is beauty and power, and such a prevailing trust in God, that, whether the sun be shining or it be obscured in the clouds, one is always filled with rejoicing.

827. "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). Truth may be compared to some cave or grotto, with wondrous stalac-

tites hanging from the roof, and others starting from the floor: a cavern glittering with spar and abounding in marvels. Before entering the cavern you enquire for a guide, who comes with his lighted flambeau. He conducts you down to a considerable depth, and you find yourself in the midst of a cave. He leads you through different chambers. Here he points you to a little stream rushing from amid the rocks, and indicates its rise and progress; there he points to some peculiar rock and tells you its name; then takes you into a large natural hall, tells you how many persons once feasted in it, and so on. Truth is a grand series of caverns; it is our glory to have so great and wise a conductor as the Holy Spirit. Imagine that we are coming to the darkness of it. He is a light shining in the midst of us to guide us, and by the light He shows us wondrous things. He teaches us by suggestion, direction, and illumination.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

828. Many are perplexed as to the meaning of Rom. 8:16: "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." W. C. Morro gives the following illustration: "It is as though I had a copy of some painting, but there was some doubt as to its being a faithful copy. To test the matter, I seek the original, and, placing them side by side, compare them. Mine conforms in all general details to the original, and so I decide it is a copy of this picture and not of some other. So, on reading the Bible, I am convinced that my obedience agrees in the main with that presented by the Spirit—not so perfect, lacking in many things, manifestly the work of an amateur, but beyond doubt a copy. Hence there is an agreement. The Spirit has borne witness with my spirit that I am a son of God."

829. Frequently, at the great Roman games, the emperors, in order to gratify the citizens of Rome, would cause sweet perfumes to be rained down upon them through the awning which covered the amphitheatre. Behold the vases, the huge vessels of perfume! Yes, but there is nought here to delight you, so long as the jars are sealed; but let the vases be opened, and the vessels be poured out, and let the drops of perfumed rain begin to descend, and every one is refreshed and gratified thereby.

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Such is the love of God. . . . See, then, the need of having the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

830. The above writer says that in the early times, when land was sold, the owner cut a turf from the greensward and cast it into the cap of the purchaser as a token that it was his; or he tore off the branch of a tree and put it into the new owner's hand to show that he was entitled to all the products of the soil; and when the purchaser of a house received seizin or possession, the key of the door, or a bundle of thatch plucked from the roof, signified that the building was yielded up to him. The God of all grace has given to His people all the perfections of heaven to be their heritage forever, and the earnest of the Spirit is to them the blessed token that all things are theirs. The Spirit's work of comfort and sanctification is a part of heaven's covenant blessings, a turf from the soil of Canaan, a twig from the tree of life, a key to mansions in the skies. Possessing the earnest of the Spirit, we have received seizin of heaven.

831. In "An Outline of My Life," James Anderson makes reference to a debate he held in Braidwood with a Mr. Steele, a Plymouth brother. Mr. Steele insisted on the Holy Spirit presiding. They agreed to ten-minute speeches. In his opening prayer, Mr. Steele poured out his complaint about "flesh desiring to have a chairman." James Anderson writes: "When a man insults you in a speech you can reply, but when a man insults you in a prayer, it is not so easy knowing what to do. He sent his insult to Heaven, and I left Heaven to deal with it. I took no notice of it. He spoke longer than his time, every time he got up." . . . Afterwards, Mr. Anderson said to a friend, a Plymouth brother, thinking of the long speeches, and trespass of his time: "There is one thing that I have made up my mind upon, and that is, your 'spirit' will never be chairman for me any more. If ever I have anything more to do with you people, I shall have some spirit in the chair that will make your man sit down when his time is up."

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

832. The Sunday school is a great deal more than is implied by certain oft-used phrases, such as "a department of the church"—"the nursery of the church"—"the church of to-morrow," etc.

It is the church instructing the school and striving to lead its members to acceptance of and service for the Saviour.

It is well that at last the school is coming to be looked upon, not as some side work of the church, but an institution to which all church-members should be attached by membership or in active work, and the view is strongly held that neither the "Cradle Roll" nor the "Home Department" should be neglected.

Our main objective in Sunday-school work should be the instructing of scholars in the truths and lofty principles of God's word, that they may be led to make the great surrender to Christ, and present to Him their consecrated talents on the altar of service. To this end Sunday-school teachers must exercise great care, lest other themes distract them from the teaching of the Scriptures. They must have great faith in their message. They must believe the Bible to be the word of God, and hold up the Lord Jesus Christ before their scholars' eyes as the only Saviour of mankind. In this way the Sunday school may be made the most successful evangelistic agency.

There is no worthier field of labor than this, providing the instruction be actuated by and given in the spirit of love. Eternity alone shall measure its good effects.

833. The true Sunday school is the church of Jesus Christ engaged in systematic study and teaching of the word of God for three great purposes: to bring into the body of Christ those within the membership of the Sunday school who are not yet members of the church or of Christ; to train up those who are in Christ into a full-grown knowledge and appropriation of the riches which are theirs because they are Christ's; and to send out into the world fully equipped, victorious soul-winners who shall be Christ's living epistles to those who do not yet know Him. . . . The purpose of the Sunday school is Bible study for justification, sanctification, and service.—*C. G. Trumbull.*

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834. At the Centennial Convention of churches of Christ, at Pittsburgh, U. S. A., 1909, Mr. Trotter said: "Don't spend fifty thousand dollars on a church steeple, and stick the primers down the coal-hole." Dr. Crossfield affirmed that "if we spend most time with adults, we begin to build the pyramids at the apex rather than the base."

835. There is a variety of reasons for the non-attendance of the adolescent boy, one of the chief of which is the lack of men teachers. From the data to hand, it is proved that where there are the largest number of *male* teachers, there are the largest number of adolescent boys. . . . Too often the boys of ten and sixteen are classed together, and the sixteen-year-old boy quits at the first opportunity. Why should such boys be condemned? We need energy-expending righteousness. Too often our conception of a boy's religion is subjective rather than objective. It is something to be, rather than something to do. Some older boys get the idea that religion is something you do not do, and that perfect sinlessness comes as near perfect inaction as anything can be.—*Edgar M. Robinson.*

836. "In a church they organised a boys' club. The ladies got a beautiful carpet. It was somewhat spoiled by the boys. The ladies insisted that the club should be stopped. One of them raised her protest to the preacher. He said: 'An inch of boy is worth a million yards of carpet.'"

837. The author of a fictional work tells how an attempt was made to rescue a young girl from degrading surroundings, in the slums of London. For a little while, the attempt appeared successful, but as time went on, the attractions of the old life proved too strong. The girl finally returned to her former associates with these words: "It's too late now; why didn't ye ketch me when I was a kid?"

838. The great educationalist of the United States, Horace Mann, on one occasion undertook the opening of a large school in Massachusetts. A very costly building had been erected, and he said: "If only one child is saved through putting up

this edifice, it is worth all the hundreds and thousands of dollars that have been spent on it." Some one asked if he did not exaggerate very much in making a statement of this kind, and he answered: "Not if it were my child."—*Dr. Clifford.*

839. Mr. Pearce, Bible-school expert of the United States of America, once told of certain homes in America for weak-minded children. Often a mother will bring her child to one of these homes. But the children are subject to certain tests, and among them is one where there are two tubs, one full and the other empty. The empty one has a hole in it, and a plug to fit. The child is required to take the water from the full tub and put it in the empty one. If it finds the water running away and puts the plug in, the officials consider it is not weak-minded. "Now," said Mr. Pearce, "the Bible school is the plug to stop the leakage in the church, but too many church officers are too weak-minded to put the plug in."

840. On April 14, 1912, the White Star liner, "Titanic," on her first voyage across the Atlantic, crashed into a huge iceberg, and slowly sank into her watery grave, carrying with her more than sixteen hundred souls. Amongst the passengers who perished were W. T. Stead, the journalist, and Astor, the millionaire. These, and many others, had to stand aside for the children. No doubt they willingly did so. In any case, it was necessary, for the children had the first chance to enter the small boats. That is how the world values the life of a child now.

SYMPATHY

841. Cicero said that our duty is not to share the sufferings of others, but to lighten them as much as possible. Christianity goes much further than this wise ancient moralist, or the loftiest of this world's philosophy, and bids us "rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep; be of the same mind one toward another" (Rom. 12:15, 16). To fully enter into others' joys and sorrows, and be of the same mind towards each other, requires an incomparably loftier spirit than is natural to man.

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It is not just saying what others expect to hear, or appearing as others expect us to be in great crises of human experience, such as bereavement, or some crushing catastrophe, but it is a spirit of compassion, influencing the whole life, and so, ready to be exercised at a moment's notice.

In our Lord Jesus, "we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). He lessens others' burdens by sharing them. Knowing that grief in isolation is well-nigh unendurable, and burdens are the heaviest when borne alone, our great High Priest, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," graciously shares with us our sorrows and burdens.

Nothing is more needed than sympathy—not mere platitudes, hollow sayings, but the spirit of compassion dominating the whole life, a heart beating in unison with the hearts of others, resulting, when required, in the helpful deed and the loving word.

842. "The whole life of the Teacher of Nazareth was full of sentiment, loving this or that young man, pardoning this or that sinner, weeping over the dead, mourning for the doomed city, blessing, and perhaps kissing, the little children, so that the Gospels are still cried over, almost as often as the last work of fiction."

843. Sympathy is commonly confined within severe conventional limits. It is often like a lake in a private park, and not like the stream which weds together the private park and the village green. It is often the dialect of the hamlet rather than the speech of a people. It is parochial rather than national, sectarian instead of universal. There are stern, hoary walls within which its movements are enclosed, and beyond the enclosures the music of its influence is never heard. But sometimes the waters rise in a gracious flood; the imprisoning walls are submerged, the boundary marks of the little hamlet are washed out, and class and caste and sect are forgotten in a broad and fruitful union. Here is a man (Cornelius) whose sympathies are at the flood, and the obstructing barriers have melted away.
—*J. H. Jowett.*

844.

"While the storm was fiercely blowing,
While the sea was wildly flowing,
Angry wind and angry billow
Only rocked the Saviour's pillow;
Jesus slept.

"But when sudden grief was rending
Human hearts, in sorrow blending;
When He saw the sisters weeping,
Where the brother's form was sleeping,
Jesus wept."

845. What finer exposition of the text, "Weep with them that weep," can you have than this pretty anecdote? "Mother," said little Annie, "I cannot make out why poor Widow Brown likes me to go in to see her; she says I do comfort her so; but, mother, I cannot say anything to comfort her, and as soon as she begins crying, I put my arms round her neck, and I cry, too, and she says that that comforts her." And so it does; that is the very essence of the comfort, the sympathy, the fellow-feeling that moved the little girl to weep with the weeping widow.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

846. A Pittsburgh preacher said, at the Centennial Convention of churches of Christ in 1909: "I heard one say recently: 'You can sing "Will there be any stars in my crown?" until you are black in the face, and you can ring your church bells until doomsday, but you will never save our district until you personally touch our people, and make them believe in you first, and, after that, in your Lord.'"

847. A certain Christian thought he could do very little, if anything, for Christ, since he was a cripple. At last some one suggested to him that he write to other "shut-ins"—prisoners in jails. He thought it a splendid idea, and started at once at his new work. Into those letters he put his very best strength of Christian manhood, ready wit, and inspiring cheer. No replies ever came, and it was a severe test to his faithfulness to do a work so little noticed or appreciated. One day a line came from a jailer: "*Dear Sir:*—Will you use thicker paper, for your letters drop to pieces with much reading as they pass from cell to cell."—*E. A. Lagerstrom.*

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848. Without sympathy and humility, life is darkened, and a thousand mystic visitors may knock at our doors unheeded and ignored. But with their presence there is a fine alertness of surface which instinctively discerns the approach of the highest, and tremblingly thrills to its touch. "The humble shall hear thereof and be glad." "Shall hear," and shall know. How love can interpret a footfall! "That is my husband coming!" "How do you know?" "Oh, I know his step; I know the way he opens the door." The interpreting discernment of an alert and sacrificing affection. "The humble shall hear!" They shall know His knock when He taps at the door of their life.
—J. W. Jowett.

849. "One day, on the banks of the Merrimac River, Massachusetts, we saw a man a quarter of a mile down the river, struggling amongst the broken cakes of ice. We could none of us for the moment determine his political complexion or bodily colour, but he proved, in the end, to be a negro. Of course the first care was to rescue him; but twice the victim slipped from the plank that was thrown him. The third time it was evident that it was the negro's last chance, and so he evidently thought; but as he again slipped from the board, he shouted: '*For the love of God, gentlemen, give me hold of the wooden end of the plank this time.*' We had been handing him the icy end. How often do Christians make the same mistake! We turn the icy end of the plank to our fellows, and then wonder why they do not hold on, and why our efforts do not save them."

850. Often we are unable to do some great thing, when we are able to help some one else that can and will do it. Shall we not share in the rewards resulting from such kindness? A lad on his way to school passed a doorstep on which sat a lame and invalid child. The passing boy said to him: "Why don't you go to school?" "Oh, I am lame and cannot walk to school." "Get on my back," said the healthy boy, "and I will carry you to school." And so he did that day and for many days, until the invalid was fairly started on the road to an education. Who was the healthy boy? I don't know. Who was the invalid? It was Robert Hall, the rapt pulpit orator of all Christendom.—
T. DeWitt Talmage.

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851. In a railway carriage I once saw a poor man with his leg placed upon the seat. An official, happening to see him in this posture, remarked: "Those cushions were not made for you to put your dirty boots on." As soon as the guard was gone the man put up his leg again, and said to me: "He has never broken his leg in two places, I am sure, or he would not be so sharp with me." When I have heard brethren who have lived at ease, enjoying good incomes, condemning others who are much tried, because they could not rejoice in their fashion, I have felt that they know nothing of the broken bones which others have to carry throughout the whole of their pilgrimage.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

852. Hearts about us are hungering for brotherly kindness more than any mere gift we can bestow upon them—and none is so poor that he can not speak a word of kindness to the suffering. During the famine that brought great suffering to the poor of Russia, thousands of whom were reduced to the verge of starvation, Count Tolstoi made every effort in his power to better the condition of these unfortunates. One day the good poet passed a beggar on the street corner. Stretching out gaunt hands, the miserable beggar asked for alms. Tolstoi felt in all his pockets for a coin to bestow upon him. He turned the pockets inside out, but to no purpose. Taking the beggar's hand in both of his, he said kindly: "Do not be angry with me, brother; I have nothing with me." The gaunt face lighted up; the man lifted his bloodshot eyes; his blue lips parted in a smile: "But you called me brother—that was a great gift."

TEMPTATION

853. Men sin, not in being tempted, but in yielding to temptation. To be tempted is the common experience of humanity. Even our Lord was tempted. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man" (1 Cor. 10:13). God seldom singles out any man to be a target for extraordinary temptation, as many imagine when considering their own experience, for He permits all to be tempted. The sin consists, not in being tempted, but in yielding to temptation.

It must also be remembered that God graduates temptation

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to our ability to resist it. He provides a way of escape; gives strength to overcome.

He teaches us that there is but one way by which temptation can be met. "Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). We must not be too confident of self, as Peter, when he boasted that he would rather die than deny his Lord, lest, like Peter, we fall. Amid ordinary gusts, a man may hold up his head, and continue his way, but when a hailstorm beats around his head, he can no longer withstand. So, amid ordinary temptations, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed" lest, amid temptation's wild storm, "he fall." To prevent this, we must not walk alone—but "walk by the Spirit."

Jesus said: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26:41). We need to stand on guard against temptation, watching for the approach of evil; to be alarmed at the entrance into the mind of an evil thought: "it is but the hiss of the serpent." Above all, we must walk in the Spirit, and by His help we shall be made more than conquerors.

There is nothing nobler than to conquer temptation. "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32).

"The greatest victory ever man attained,
Is that which o'er himself, himself hath gained."

854. The word "temptation" is from the Latin *tento* or *tempto*, which had a double meaning, as had our English word when the Bible was translated—an allurements to evil, or a testing of value. God does not tempt any man in the first sense (Jas. 1:13), but only in the second sense. "If Satan tries us, he tries us in order to develop our wickedness; but if God tries us, it is to develop faith in Him."—Howard Crosby.

855. J. H. Jowett well says: "Whatever else my Lord shall be to me, He shall not be a counterfeit man, exposed to counterfeit fire, a mere stage fire, a man played upon by harmless sheet-lightning, and never moving amid the dreaded bolts and forked flame. His shall not be the sham fight, and mine the actual struggle, or He can be no leader for me. He Himself 'suffered being tempted.' He felt the real heat of the fire, he felt the fascination of the real seduction. . . . Jesus of Nazareth had the

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real devil to meet and the real battle to wage, and the garlands on His noble brow were nobly won."

856. No man ever entered a "blind alley" of temptation. The road of temptation is always a forked road, and one of the forks leads out of the difficulty.—*Sunday School Times*.

857. "Temptation is like a winter torrent, difficult to cross. Some, being most skilful swimmers, pass over, not being whelmed beneath temptations, nor swept down by them at all, while others, who are not such, entering into them, sink in them. As for example, Judas, entering into the temptation of covetousness, swam not through it, but, sinking beneath it, was choked both in body and spirit. Peter entered into the temptation of the denial, but, having entered it, he was not overwhelmed by it, but, manfully swimming through it, he was delivered."

858. A broad-shouldered Scotchman said, as he looked at Ary Scheffer's painting of the "Temptation of Our Lord," pointing to the figure of Satan: "If that chiel cam tae me in sic' an ugly shape, I think he wid hae a tough job wi' me tae." But, as Peloubet says: "The pictures of Satan as the fire-breathing Apollyon, or as one wearing a human form equipped with huge bat-like wings, horns, tail, and webbed feet, as on the doors of the Pisa Cathedral, or as a black monster with tail, claws, and horns, as in St. Mark's, Venice, are mere allegories and symbols to make his real nature apparent and the impression deep. Such a Satan, actually before us, could never tempt us. Temptation is always disguised. It comes as an angel of light. It makes evil seem good. The prophet of the silver veil in 'Lalla Rookh' tempts Zelica by visions of blessing which conceal his selfish soul, and by the silver veil which hides his hideous features. He seems to her to be

" 'Some pure redeeming angel sent to free
This fettered world from every bond and stain,
And bring its primal glories back again.' "

859. A young lady went down a mine. She said first to the man conducting the party: "Can I go down in this white dress?" "Yes, missie," he replied, "but you won't come up in it."

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860. Temptation is never unbearable. Have you ever noticed those trucks on the trains? You see one truck 5-3-O. What do the figures mean? They represent what is called the "load limit" of the truck. The truck can only carry 5 tons 300 weight, and it is dangerous to impose upon it any heavier weight. Every man has a "load limit," and He who permits the temptation will also regulate it.—*Emma C. Fisk.*

861. In a shipping disaster at Samoa, the way in which the British man-of-war, the "Calliope," escaped, is suggestive. Her machinery was very powerful, and just as she was about to strike the reef, she raised her anchors, and, right in the face of the terrible storm, steamed out of the harbour and into the open sea, where she safely outrode the storm. In the Christian life there are times when safety is only to be found in like decisiveness and boldness. Strengthened with all might by His Spirit in the inner man, the soul must bravely go forth to meet its spiritual foes, and boldly attack them.—*C. M. Hawkins.*

862. Many horses fall at the bottom of a hill because the driver thinks the danger past and the need to hold the reins with firm grip, less pressing. So it is often with us when we are not specially tempted to overt sin: we are the more in danger through slothful ease. I think it was Ralph Erskine who said: "There is no devil so bad as no devil." The worst temptation that ever overtakes us is, in some respects, preferable to our becoming carnally secure and neglecting to watch and pray.

"More the treacherous calm I dread
Than tempests rolling overhead."

—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

863. "Perhaps you have seen the picture of a boy and a pony. The boy has an apple in his right hand, while his left hand is hid behind his back. Why? Because he has a halter in it with which he means to catch the pony when it comes to take the apple. Satan presents sin to us as a tempting morsel, and if we yield to it, he will throw the halter over our heads and lead us into sin."

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864. It does not require a devil to tempt you. The smallest thing can tempt. As poor John Bunyan said once, something kept tempting him to sell Christ. If he stooped to pick up a pin, the voice said: "*Sell Him for that! sell Him for that!*" And men sell their honour for things as cheap. A pin will do it; a sweet smile; a fair face; the ruby wine; the love of money. Ah! for what has not a man sold his soul!—*George Dawson*.

865. "A man got up in a meeting to speak. He was a farmer, an old man. He had become a Christian late in life, and this evening was telling about his start. He had been a rough, bad man. He said that when he became a Christian even the cat knew that some change had taken place. That caught my ear. It had a genuine ring. It seemed prophetic of the better day coming for all the lower animal creation. So I listened. He said that the next morning after the change of purpose he was going down to the village a little distance from his farm. He swung along the road, happy in heart, and thinking about the Saviour. All at once he could feel the fumes coming out of a saloon ahead. He couldn't see the place yet, but his keen, trained nose felt it. The odours came out strong, and gripped him. He said he was frightened, and wondered how he would get by. He had never gone by before, he said—always gone in; but he couldn't go in now. But what to do, that was the rub. Then he smiled, and said: 'I remembered, and I said, "Jesus, you'll have to come along and help me get by; I never can by myself."' And then in his simple, illiterate way he said: '*And He come and we went by, and we've been going by ever since.*'"

THANKFULNESS

866. Thankfulness has been termed the poor man's payment. It is a virtue all can possess. Paul tells the Ephesian disciples to give "thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father" (Eph. 5:20). He exhorts the Philippians: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). To the Thessalonians he writes: "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward" (1 Thess. 5:18).

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In *everything*! This comes as a surprise when one considers the vicissitudes of human life; sickness and health, poverty and wealth, joy and sorrow, are all ingredients of the cup placed to human lips; so all must come within the scope of thanksgiving. Why be thankful for everything? Because everything is for good to those who love God (Rom. 8:28).

It must also be remembered that nothing is more acceptable to God than thanksgiving. He longs for an acknowledgment of His lovingkindness. At a glance, He can see whether the heart is thankful or unthankful.

The continual exercise of thankfulness is advantageous. God has countless blessings in store for thankful souls, and has designed that by this holy exercise preparation be made for the eternal chorus of praise by angelic hosts, when thankfulness shall be perfected, and heaven's arches shall ring with the ascription of praise. "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 7:12).

867. Thankfulness for one blessing secures the reception of another, and a greater. The Samaritan came to thank Jesus for the cure of his leprosy, and received from Him the salvation of his soul.—*W. M. Taylor*.

868. "With thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." As God hath an open hand to give, so He hath an open eye to see who comes to His door, and to discern between the thankful beggar and the unthankful.—*Gurnall*.

869. Do you not teach your children to say "Thank you" for what they receive? Even the baby, before it can speak, is made to utter a "ta"—an expression of gratitude for what it is given. Well, we are the children of God, and He demands of us that we shall not take anything He gives us as a matter of course, but in a spirit of thankfulness.—*Baring-Gould*.

870. A physician, in an account of his work among hospital children, says: "One little fellow had to have some dead bone removed from his arm. He got well, and perhaps thought I had taken a good deal of interest in him. The morning he was

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to leave he sent for me. When I reached his bed, I bent over him: 'Well, Willie,' I said, 'did you want to see me specially?' The little fellow reached his hand up and laid it on my shoulder as I bent over him, and whispered: 'My mamma will never hear the last about you.'" Can we conceive of a more beautiful expression of gratitude? In like manner we should resolve that we will never let the world hear the last of the blessings God showers upon us.

871. Archibald Brown, preaching in Melbourne, commented upon Ps. 92:3: "Upon an instrument of ten strings." He said: "Where do you find an instrument of ten strings? There are none in London, and I don't think you could find one in Melbourne. I'll tell you of the instrument of ten strings. It is man! I have seen it quaintly put thus: 'Man has two eyes to see God with; two ears to hear God with; two hands to work for God; two feet to walk with God; one tongue to praise God with—one heart to feel for God—"an instrument of ten strings."'"

872. The famous musician Haydn, sick and weary, was carried for the last time into a hall of music. There he listened to the rendering of his own oratorio, "The Creation." When the orchestra came to the noted passage in the score which harmoniously says, "Let there be light!" it is said that the whole audience rose up and cheered and cheered. Then Haydn waved his hand toward heaven and exclaimed: "It comes from there! It comes from there!" That great genius of melody had the right thought. The inspiration with which he wrote his masterpiece was God-given. God is the fountain of every gift that flows into every life.—*W. H. Bancroft.*

873. "Some years ago an old colored woman was put up at auction at a slave-market. She was distressed lest she might be sold to a cruel master. A good man bought her and set her free at once. But she would not leave him who had set her free, and insisted upon going into his household and working for him. Now when she could do what she pleased she would not go anywhere but to him. She would say: 'He saved me,

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he saved me.' This is how we ought to feel toward Him who died for us and set us free."

874. On a recent Monday I was walking along the streets of one of our large cities. Physically I was tired, mentally I was weary, and spiritually I was weak. The Sunday had been a very full one. There had been nothing specially to cheer me, and I had had no souls for my hire. All unexpectedly I came upon a friend and brother, who, while a business man, knows something of a preacher's heart-experience; and sympathetically he "entered in." He did not tell me that I was "under the juniper-tree." No, he was too wise and too kind for that. But he told me with what pleasure he always listened to my messages, and said: "I have never heard you preach but that I went away feeling I wanted to be a better man." Then he shook my hand, and we parted. But I cannot forget his kindly, timely word; it stays with me, it spurs me on to try again, and makes me feel perhaps my ministry is after all not in vain. I think God must have sent him to me that day.—*Preacher in "Australian Christian."*

875. "A man once bored C. H. Spurgeon unmercifully, and ended thus: 'Well, for my part, Mr. Spurgeon, I cannot agree that I have much to thank God for. I confidently believe that, when I die, there will just be an end of me.' 'Ah! then, sir,' said Spurgeon, 'you can certainly thank God for that.'"

TRUTH

876. Lamentable indifference to the truths of religion is prevalent amongst professing Christians, as well as men of the world. How often do men express themselves thus: "What a man believes doesn't count; it is what a man is!" A poet has expressed this commonly held opinion:

"For modes of faith let senseless bigots fight;
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

It is often said: "It doesn't matter what church you belong to: all are bound for the same place." Such folks should logically plead for idolatry, for it "doesn't matter," so long as worshippers are sincere.

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Our Lord shows that it does matter, and that indifference to revealed truth is sinful, for all could know the truth if they sought for it.

Jesus said: "To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (John 18: 37). "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth" (John 16: 13). "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8: 31, 32). "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth" (John 17: 17).

There is no nobler pursuit than that of truth. Our Lord shows that it is worth searching for and maintaining. We should "buy the truth, and sell it not" (Prov. 23: 23), having great faith in the power of truth to convince the world.

To speak the "truth in love" is the best means in striving to win the world to Christ. Truth and love should go hand in hand as the two most powerful agencies for good. The one is useless without the other. This is frequently overlooked by those who never do anything except to try to floor heretics; they delight in dealing sledge-hammer blows upon those who differ from them; they never give such the slightest credit for sincerity; their work is ineffective; they win no victories, because truth goes to battle without its powerful ally of love.

The best way to oppose error is to lovingly and simply speak the truth. It will do its work.

877. We talk much of toleration. If we mean by that a generous sympathy with the different forms of opinion, then it is Christian. If toleration means compassion for frailty and a willingness ever to make a distinction between tempted weakness and deliberate evil, then toleration is nothing more than another name for the mind of Christ. But if it mean that we are to reckon one form of opinion as good as another, and look upon sin merely as a disease against which we cannot feel indignation, then most unquestionably Christianity has in it no toleration. . . . The price of being true is the cross. The warrior of the truth must not expect success. What have we to do with popularity? Sow for it, and you will have it. But if you wish for it, or wish for peace, you have mistaken your calling—you

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must not be a teacher of the truth; you must cut prejudice against the grain; you must leave medical, legal, theological truth to harder and nobler men, who are willing to take the martyr's cross, and win the martyr's crown.—*F. W. Robertson.*

878. Truth and error are all one to the ignorant man, so it hath but the name of truth. You have, maybe, heard of the covetous man that hugged himself in the many bags of gold he had, but never opened them, or used them; when the thief took away his gold, and left him his bags full of pebbles in the room, he was as happy as when he had his gold, for he looked not at the one or the other. And verily an ignorant person is in a manner no better with truth than error on his side; both are alike to him, day and night; all one to a blind man.—*Gurnall.*

879. When I was very young, perhaps about sixteen years of age, I breakfasted with Cæsar Malan, of Geneva, at Dr. John Brown's. When the Doctor told him that I was a young student of divinity, he said to me: "Well, my young friend, see that you hold up the lamp of truth to let the people see. Hold it up, hold it up, and trim it well. But remember this, you must not dash the lamp in people's faces. That would not help them to see." How often have I remembered his words! They have often been of use to me.—*Dr. Morrison.*

880. "On one occasion a boy, weak in mind, was asked, while rubbing a brass plate on a door, what he was doing, when he replied: 'I am rubbing out the name.' Little was the boy aware that the more he rubbed, the brighter it shone. Satan would fain rub out the word of God from human memory, but the more he rubs, the brighter it shines."

881. The loss of the least truth, whether you reckon it fundamental or not, is of dangerous consequence; the loss of the least divine truth is as the loss of a diamond out of a ring, or of a jewel out of the Mediator's crown. The gospel is like a ladder that hath so many steps, or rounds; every truth is like a round of the ladder, and by these rounds we climb up to heaven; if you break off any round, you are in danger of falling; and your climbing up is rendered either difficult or impossible.

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The truths of the gospel are like stepping-stones over a deep water: take away any of these stones, and you make such a wide and dangerous step that you are in hazard of falling into the deep.—*Erskine*.

882. I used to think that I had to take care of the Bible. I thought it might go down unless I defended it. I don't feel that way any more. On one occasion I was going away from home and said to my little four-year-old boy: "You must take care of mamma while I am gone." That night, in his prayer, he said: "Bless grandma and take care of her; bless little sister and take care of her; as for mamma, I'll take care of her myself." What folly for us to imagine that we are taking care of the very power that is taking care of us.—*A. C. Dixon*.

883. When a certain general was plundering a palace, one of his soldiers found in a leather bag the crown jewels. The prize was worth millions, but the stupid soldier shook the glittering stones out among the rubbish, and went away boasting about the fine sack he had got for carrying his food. He did not know the value of the great treasure he had thrown away.

884. We are told that, some years ago, there was in vogue a mode of preparing old clover and trefoil seeds, by a process called "doctoring," which became so popular as to attract the attention of the House of Commons. By this process old and worthless seed was rendered in appearance equal to the rest. One witness tried some *doctored* seed, and found that not above one grain in a hundred grew. Is it not to be feared that a doctored gospel is becoming very common among us, and, if so, it is no wonder that conversions are but few. Only pure truth is living seed.—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

UNBELIEF

885. More frequently than otherwise, unbelief arises from hatred of the practise of Christianity, rather than inability to accept its truths. Men disbelieve the religion of Jesus because their lives are so out of harmony with its principles.

Others accept the truths of Christianity, but refuse to trust its divine Founder. They place between themselves and Christ an impassable barrier, for "without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto God" (Heb. 11:6).

There are certain forms of unbelief, such as rationalism and atheism, which are joined in an unholy alliance arrayed against the impregnable rock of Holy Writ.

But perhaps the worst form of unbelief is shown by those who know the truth, but do not obey it; who believe in Christ, but withhold from Him implicit trust.

Unbelief on the part of non-Christians closes to them the door of the kingdom, even as Canaan was closed to the Israelites of old, "who were not able to enter in because of unbelief."

Unbelief on the part of Christians prevents the exercise of divine power. When Christ was at Capernaum "he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Unbelief tied the divine hands, and nothing but unbelief can keep back Christ's wonder-working energy; but that will do it, as effectually as a hermetically sealed box shuts out the sunshine. If we are faithless, God will no more use us than soldiers a reed as a bayonet. Only believe, and the Lord will lay bare His arm, and work wonders. No victory is ever won by doubting. Unbelief never puts to flight the armies of aliens; it has never stopped the mouths of lions, or quenched the violence of fire. Point to the wonders of unbelief, if you can! All it can show is utter ruin and desolation.

886. Unbelief is the occasion of all sin, and the very bond of iniquity. It does nothing but darken and destroy. It makes the world a moral desert, where no divine footsteps are heard, where no angels ascend and descend, where no living hand adorns the fields, feeds the fowls of heaven, or regulates events. Thus it makes nature, the garden of God, a mere automaton, and the history of providence a fortuitous succession of events; a man, a creation of accidents, and prayer, a useless ceremony. It annihilates even the vestiges of heaven that still remain upon the earth, and stops the way to every higher region.—*Dr. Krummacher.*

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887. If there be a God, a man cannot, by an obstinate disbelief of Him, make Him cease to be, any more than a man can put out the sun by winking.—*Tillotson*.

888. I once heard of two men who, under the influence of liquor, came down one night to where their boat was tied. They wanted to return home, so they got in and began to row. They pulled away hard all night, wondering why they never got to the other side of the bay. When the grey dawn of morning broke, behold, they had never loosed the mooring-line or raised the anchor! And that's just the way with many who are striving to enter the kingdom of heaven. They cannot believe, because they are tied to this world. Cut the cord! cut the cord! Set yourselves free from the clogging weight of earthly things, and you will soon go on towards heaven.—*D. L. Moody*.

889. Here is a man at sea; he has got a chart, and that chart, if well studied, will, with the help of the compass, guide him to his journey's end. The pole-star gleams out amidst the cloud-rifts, and that, too, will help him. "No," says he, "I will have nothing to do with your stars; I do not believe in the north pole; I shall not attend to that little thing inside the box; one needle is as good as another. I do not believe in your rubbish, and I will have nothing to do with it; it is only a lot of nonsense got up by people on purpose to make money, and I will have nothing to do with it." The man does not get to shore anywhere; he drifts about, but never reaches port, and he says it is a very hard thing, a very hard thing. I do not think so. So some of you say: "Well, I am not going to read your Bible; I am not going to listen to your talk about Jesus Christ; I do not believe in such things." You will be damned, then, sir! "That's very hard," say you. No, it is not. It is not more so than the fact that if you reject the compass and the pole-star you will not get to your journey's end.—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

890. "If a man [says the above writer] will not do the thing that is necessary to a certain end, I do not see how he can expect to gain that end. You have taken poison, and the physician brings an antidote, and says: 'Take it quickly, or you will die; but if you take it quickly, I will guarantee that the

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poison will be neutralised.' But you say: 'No, Doctor, I do not believe it; let everything take its course; let every tub stand on its own bottom; I will have nothing to do with you, Doctor.' Well, sir, you will die, and when the coroner's inquest is held on your body, the verdict will be, 'Served him right.' So will it be with you if, having heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, you say: 'Oh! pooh-pooh! I am too much of a common-sense man to have anything to do with that, and I shall not attend to it.' Then, when you perish, the verdict given by your conscience, which will sit upon the king's quest at last, will be a verdict of *Felo de se* (he destroyed himself). So says the old Book: 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.'"

891. A party of boatmen on the Niagara River may have a very strong opinion when they are caught by the rapids, that it is very pleasant rowing; but neither their shouts nor their merriment will alter the fact that the world's cataract is close at hand. You have a strong opinion that hell is a delusion; that they are superstitious, and cruel, and ignorant who ask you to pause, and awake, and prepare for this coming, this continued retribution; but your opinion will not have the slightest, the remotest, the minutest influence on the tremendous fact.—*Reynolds*.

892. Once a sceptic in Dr. Bonar's church said: "Sir, I do not believe there is a God." It was 10 p. m. and no time for argument. I cast the burden on the Lord in prayer, and looked so happy that he said: "Are you laughing at me?" "No; but I was thinking if all the grasshoppers on earth were to say there is no sun, *it would not alter the matter*. The Bible says, 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.'" "Well, that is so," he said. I then showed him that God calls every man who does not believe in Him a liar. The man went home seeming much impressed; and when I met him some months afterwards he said: "I found out that I was a fool and a liar, and have come to Christ." Thus the sword of the Spirit had pierced his heart.—*Dr. Mackay*.

893. A gentleman living in Texas was an unbeliever. One day he was walking in his garden reading a book. He read

this sentence: "God works according to the rules of geometry." He closed the book, and began to think. "I always thought," said he to himself, "that things were made by chance. Is there a rule about everything?" Just then he saw close by a sweet little flower known as the "Texas Star." He picked it up, and began to examine it. He counted the petals. He found there were five. He counted the stamens; there were five of them. Then he examined another flower. It was the same with that. Another and another were examined. It was the same with all. There were five petals, and five stamens, and so on, in every case. "How is this?" he said to himself. "If these flowers were made by chance, some of them would have three petals, and some two, and some none. But now they all have five; never more, and never less. Here is work done by rule. If it is done in this way, there must be some one to do it. And who can that be? Oh, I see!" And then he picked up the little flower, and kissed it, and said: "Bloom on, little flower; sing on, little birds; you have a God, and I have a God. The God that made these little flowers made me."—*Dr. Newton.*

UNION—CHRISTIAN

894. Why should all the disciples of Christ be united in one body? Chiefly because Christ Jesus desired and prayed for it (John 17). This should be, to all who love the Lord, an all-sufficient reason in itself. But other reasons are given in the Scriptures, which deserve devout attention. It is the teaching of the New Testament throughout. It is impossible to read it without seeing this tendency. The loving unity of the church is the potent force in winning the world to Christ. A divided church is the greatest hindrance to the conversion of mankind.

What is the nature of this unity? It is a oneness of mind and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10); of doctrine (1 Cor. 1:10); of heart and of soul (Acts 4:32). It is undivided fellowship in Christ.

"Names and sects and parties fall, and Jesus Christ is all in all." What is the basis of this unity? It is the divine basis which the Holy Spirit of God has defined and declared. No human basis, however plausible, is permissible. This basis is found in Eph. 4:1-6. "The unity of the Spirit;" that is, the

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unity which the Holy Spirit has declared is made up of seven units—the perfect number. This unity is perfect. We may use the homely illustration of a carriage wheel, with seven sections. All the sections together make a perfect circle—a perfect wheel. Remove any one of them and the wheel is destroyed—the perfect circle is broken. The wheel is bound and kept intact by a strong iron band. Remove the band and the wheel soon falls to pieces. So is the unity of the Spirit. It is perfect. It has seven parts. “One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father.” These seven sections are perfectly joined together, forming a complete circle. They are all kept together by the bond of love. Remove any one section and the circle is broken. Remove the band of love and the whole falls to pieces. Kept intact, it works harmoniously, smoothly, and accomplishes the divine purpose.

What is the precise meaning of these seven units? The New Testament expounds them. For example, the “one baptism” is the baptism in the commission, “Baptizing them [those who became disciples] into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). It was the baptism of Pentecost, when three thousand, who repented of their sins, were baptised in the name of Christ (Acts 2:41). It was the baptism referred to by Paul in Rom. 6:2; Col. 2:12. There it is spoken of as a burial with Christ into His death and a resurrection into His life. It is the baptism in water. (See Acts 8.)

Let all believers pledge themselves to hold fast to the unity of the Spirit as set out in Eph. 4:3, and to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the inspired writings of the New Testament in His exposition of the seven fundamental units, and nothing will stand in the way of their fellowship and unity.

895. Let the Bible be substituted for all human creeds; facts, for definitions; things, for words; faith, for speculation; unity of faith, for unity of opinion; the positive commandments of God, for human legislation and tradition; piety, for ceremony; morality, for partisan zeal; the practise of religion, for the mere profession of it: and the work is done.—*Alex. Campbell.*

896. When we consider the degradation of Islam in lands like Morocco, its disintegration in Persia, its stagnation in Arabia,

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its attempted reformation in Egypt and India, its neglect in China, and the encroachment of Islam on all the pagan tribes of Africa, shall we not pray and labour for a closer co-operation of all the forces of Christianity and for a united Christendom in its mission to Islam?—*Dr. Zwemer.*

897. THE NATURE OF UNITY.—“Men talk about fraternal relations, but our Lord did not pray that they may be one as John and James are one, or as brothers are one, but as Thou and I are one. You cannot express one God in a split church.”

898. Uniformity is not possible. Men differ much in the powers of their mind, in their education, and in the circumstances in which they live; and therefore you cannot make them think and feel alike; and the attempt to do so is as unwise as if you tried to cause all the trees of the earth to produce leaves of the same size, blossoms of the same hue, and fruit of the same flavour. . . . It is not uniformity that we see in the works of God, but unity in variety and permanence in change. Every plant, flower, and tree has freedom to unfold itself according to its own nature; and yet the landscape is one.—*Thomas Jones.*

899. “When the tide is out, you see little pools of water on the beach, scattered here and there over the sand. When the tide comes in, the places are still there, but so blended with the overflowing fulness that no one perceives them. When there is the overflowing fulness of Christ, there will be Christian unity.”

900. THE DESIRABILITY OF UNION.—Union is desirable because of the evils of sectarianism. In point of fact, that unity (of Eph. 4: 3-6) has been broken for centuries—as any one may see. The “one body” is not to be found; the “one Spirit” has been lamentably torn and enfeebled; the “one hope” has been dimmed and rendered uncertain, so that scarcely two expositors interpret it alike; and the “one faith” has been resolved into a complex system by some, and variously particularised by others; while as for the “one immersion,” it has been nearly abandoned in Western Christendom, and in Eastern Christendom been changed into an essentially different rite.—*J. B. Rotherham.*

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901. A Syrian child was sent to Boston, where she was asked what church she belonged to. Her teacher on the mission field had not given her any denominational instruction, so she replied: "I belong to the Christian Church." She was so puzzled by questions that she wrote back to her teachers on the mission field: "I want you please to tell me to what church I belong."—*Dr. Newman Smyth.*

902. There will never be a converted world until there is a united church.—*Dr. Fitchett.*

"Unity is set forth in the New Testament as a fundamental conception of the church. Christ prayed for it; the apostles strove to preserve it. The ideal we should ever keep before us."

903. God has promised us "an everlasting name that shall not be cut off." Ptolemy, when he would build the celebrated light-house, Pharos, one of the seven wonders of the world, called to his assistance Sostratus, the great architect. The king ordered his own name on the structure. But Sostratus felt that his name, rather than the king's, should be perpetuated, and so he cut the king's name in plaster, but carved his own name in the granite. The waves soon washed away the plaster, and the king's name was gone, leaving the name of Sostratus in enduring letters. Our human names—Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, etc.—however dear to us, are destined to die. The waves of time will wash away all except the everlasting name, the name of our "Prophet, Priest and King."—*H. W. Beecher.* At a communion service, one said: "We now use the names 'Methodist,' 'Congregationalist,' 'Presbyterian,' and the like, for convenience' sake, it is said, but let me speak the language of heaven, and call you simply 'Christians.'"

904. I wish all names among the saints of God were swallowed up in that one of "Christian." I long for professors to leave off placing religion in saying: "I am a churchman;" "I am a dissister." My language to such is: "Are you of Christ? If so, I love you with all my heart."—*Whitefield.*

905. Unity will come as we learn how to recognise the value of the truths for which others stand, and to make room for

their expression whilst we maintain the truth which has been revealed to us, and for which we stand.—“*Missions*” (Home University Library).

VISION

906. Twenty-six centuries ago Solomon wrote: “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Prov. 29:18). History endorses that utterance. A visionless people are a dying people. Upon the church or Bible-school edifices wherein assemble visionless workers one might truthfully paint “Ichabod,” for they have allied themselves with a dying race.

Some visions break up, like castles in the air, for they are simply the figments of one’s own imagination; but not so the visions of prophets of old, who peered down the vista of time, and saw things which were actually to come. Visions also occupy a large place in New Testament history. When the seventy chosen disciples returned with the joyful tidings that the very devils had been subject to them, Jesus saw a vision, and probably thought of that time when Satan and his mighty host shall be utterly vanquished, and He exclaimed: “I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven” (Luke 10:18). When John, on Patmos isle, was spectator of the panoramic view of future triumphs recorded in the Book of Revelation, he beheld a countless multitude, clothed in white robes, and with palms in their hands, and heard them singing: “Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb” (Rev. 7:9, 10). So, at the back of each great achievement there must be a vision, and both the world and church owe everything worth while to seers of visions.

But mere visions will do nothing. We must not be impractical dreamers. Visions are a means to an end, and not the end itself. Our visions must actualise, or they are useless. Care should be taken that we be “not disobedient unto the heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19). We must see, and then obey. Beholding a glorious vision of regenerated humanity, we should press forward in the divine work till the vision becomes translated into an actuality.

907. The place of vision is at the cross. It is the focal point of faith, the pivotal place of hope, and the central apex of divine

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love. It is the place where Calvary interprets the incarnation. But the place of vision is not an end, it is a means to an end. Visions reveal occasions. They clarify the new and whitening horizons. They summon us to resolution. When vision affects the mere visual organ it is as a spectrum or a mirage, and as such is apt to be monocular or astigmatic. The vision of the cross with the uplifted Christ, pointing his bleeding fingers as far as the east is from the west, in the putting away of sin, is the vision that leads, inspires, moves men to follow the gleam, sees the redemption clear and beautiful, and goes on its way turning the unseen into seen. This is vision actualised. . . . Oh that God would take our great, wealthy, strong, educated, and privileged brotherhood to some mountain height, or to some valley of humiliation, and show to us, as a people, under the penetrating searchlight of a new and spiritual vision, what we really are in His own holy sight and estimation! We should have one clear vision of Jesus Christ. We should read afresh with a cleansed vision, and a new dedication of all we have and are, the meaning of the great commission, and thrust ourselves into its service with all the expulsive power of a new affection.—*W. Remfry Hunt.*

908. "There are some men who can live up to their ideals, and still drag the ground."

909. "'Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.' Therefore we are to see a certain vision which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive,' a vision surpassing all earthly beautifulness of sea and air; the beautifulness of sun, and of moon, and of stars, yea, of the beautifulness of angels, surpassing all things, because from it are all things beautiful."

910. Visions are frequently affected by character. A story is told by Helvetius of two individuals who believed the moon to be inhabited, and, telescope in hand, were attempting to discover its inhabitants. One was a parson, and the other was a fine lady. The lady, of course, looked first, and she said: "I see two shadows, and they bend towards each other; they are evidently

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two happy lovers." The parson looked next, and said: "Fie, madam! for shame! The shadows you saw are the two steeples of a cathedral."—*W. Hamilton.*

911. Ben Jonson said: "Some people will see more in a short stage-coach ride than others will in a trip round the globe. We need the seeing eye." A poet has put it thus:

"Two men looked out from prison bars;
One saw mud, the other stars."

An old lady, says Tennyson Smith, was having a ride in a train for the first time. She was afterwards asked: "What did you see?" "See!" she replied; "I saw nothing at all but a haystack, and that was going the wrong way."

912. It is recorded of a certain man that his powers of vision were so extraordinary that he could distinctly see the fleet of the Carthaginians enter the harbour of Carthage while he stood himself at Lilybæum, in Sicily. A man seeing across the ocean, and able to tell of objects so far off! He could feast his vision on what others saw not. Whether this story be true or not, it serves as an illustration of the fact that faith now stands at its Lilybæum, and sees the long-tossed fleet entering safely the desired haven, enjoying the bliss of that still distant day, as if it was already come.—*Andrew A. Bonar.*

913. What we need is an enlarged vision. The big task appeals. "A Toronto (Can.) business man insisted that he was too busy to act as director of the local Young Men's Christian Association—one hour a month! Six weeks later he was asked to leave his business and go around the world and inspect mission stations at his own expense. He did. When he got back he was asked to give six months more away from his business and tell—at his own expense—what he saw. He did. It seems that men have time for the big things of religion. A Montreal millionaire was shown how he could evangelise a million men in about the time it would need to make another million dollars. The big task appealed to him, and he is doing it. It is these things that make Detroit sit up and listen to the Laymen's Missionary Movement."

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914. Unless a man believe in something far brighter than himself, something infinitely purer and grander than he can ever become—unless he has an instinct of an order beyond dreams, of law beyond his comprehension, of beauty, goodness and justice, beside which his own ideals are dark, he will fail in every loftier form of ambition, and ought to fail.—*Bayard Taylor.*

915. Napoleon is said to have received his youthful vision on the fateful day that he read Bishop Bossuet's "Discourse on Universal History," with its description of Alexander and Cæsar. When he finished reading they tell us that he sprang to his feet, face flushed, eyes blazing with fire as he cried out: "I, too, shall be a conqueror, and perhaps an emperor." "I came, I saw, I conquered," declared Cæsar.—*H. E. Knott.*

WORK

916. No greater privilege could God confer upon a man than to permit him to be a colaborer with Him. Being omnipotent, He needed not man's help, but graciously chose to use human agency for the accomplishment of His purposes.

It is not enough to know the truth. A soldier's lifetime may be frittered away examining maps or preparing equipment at the barracks, but the real fighting is on the battlefield. To-day the call comes as of old: "Son, go work" (Matt. 21:28). No greater need exists than that of answering this call. There are stupendous reasons for arousing ourselves from lethargy; there is so much evil to fight against, so much indifference to dispel, so much territory to be regained. Unprecedented opportunities of usefulness present themselves. The demand for a large increase of workers is greater than ever.

There is a great variety of work, for the welfare of men, and the glory of God. Such work, like the workers, is eternal. "They shall rest from their labors, for their works follow with them" (Rev. 14:13). "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:17).

The feeblest disciple can do some work for Christ. "Be a support in the household if you are not able to become a pillar

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of the state; be a lamp in the chamber if you cannot be a star in the sky; gladden the circle of home if it transcends your powers to illumine the town; talk to the few if you have no vocation to speak to the crowd."

917. "Prosper thou the *work* of our hands." Feelings pass, thoughts and imaginations pass, dreams pass; work remains. Through eternity, what you have done—that you are. They tell us that not a sound has ever ceased to vibrate through space; that not a ripple has ever been lost upon the ocean. Much more is it true that not a true thought, nor a pure resolve, nor a loving act, has ever gone forth in vain. . . . Life passes; work is permanent. It is all going—fleeting and withering. Youth goes, mind decays. That which is done, remains. Through ages, through eternity, what you have done for God—that, and only that, you are. Ye that are workers, and count it the soul's worst disgrace to feel life passing in idleness and uselessness, take courage. Deeds never die.—*F. W. Robertson.*

918. A great preacher said at a Brotherhood convention: "It is a beautiful thing to see a man take off his hat and bow to an ideal, but it is an infinitely finer thing for him to take off his coat and fall to work for it."

919. "A single buzzing mosquito may create a sleepless night. A solitary flower may bring a message of delight. The largeness or the littleness of spiritual things cannot be measured with a foot-rule, and something of the smallest consequence to us, because it is not our own concern, may be tremendous to another. To a bird that builds its nest a string is as much as a hawser to a sailor. An ant toils bravely with an egg thrice its size: it is as though you or I were dealing with a piano or sideboard single-handed. . . . The man or woman who does not neglect the little duties is pretty likely to be right on the bigger things."

920. All men cannot work in the same way. "There are diversities of operation." Upon the face of a watch you may see an illustration of my meaning. On that small space you have three workers: there is the second-pointer, performing

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rapid evolutions; there is the minute-pointer, going at a greatly reduced speed; and there is the hour-pointer, tardier still. Now, any one unacquainted with the mechanism of a watch would conclude that the busy little second-pointer was doing all the work; it is clicking away at sixty times the speed of the minute-pointer; and as for the hour-hand, *that* seems to be doing no work at all. You can see in a moment that the first is busy, and in a short time you will see the second stir; but you must wait still longer to assure yourself of the motion of the third. So it is in the church. There are active, fussy men who appear to be doing the work of the whole community, and others who are slower. But can we do without the minute and hour pointers? The noisy second-hand might go round its little circle forever, without telling the world the true time. We should be thankful for all kinds of workers. The silent, steady hour-hand need not envy its noisy little colleague. Every man must fill the measure of his capacity. Your business is to do your allotted work so as to meet the approbation of the Master.—*Joseph Parker.*

921. During one of the great battles of the Civil War, a recruit who had lost his company in the tumult of strife, approached General Sheridan and timidly asked where he should "step in." "Step in?" thundered Sheridan, in a voice that frightened the already terrified recruit almost as much as the roar of cannonading and musketry; "step in anywhere; there's fighting all along the line." An accident occurred recently that very forcibly brought Sheridan's words to mind. A heavy piece of machinery was being moved into a building by means of a block and tackle. Suddenly one of the ropes parted and the machine began to slide backward. The two men who had charge of the work sprang to stay its progress, but it was more than they were capable of doing. "Give us a lift!" one of them shouted to a bystander. "Where shall I take hold?" asked the man thus addressed, unmindful of the fact that both men were exerting every muscle to control the machine and that there was not a second to lose. "Grab hold anywhere!" yelled the mover.

922. "An old potter, who was shaping the clay into the desired shape by his hands, was asked by a visitor, 'Why don't you have

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machinery to do that?' The old man replied: 'We have tried all kinds of machinery, and failed; somehow it needs the human touch.' God has much work that can not be done by machinery."

923. J. W. Chapman says: "A poet in our country has said that when a man is born his work is born with him, and that is true. If you do not do your work, some one else will have to double up, and do twice his own work, or else the work will have to remain undone."

924. "A slave-driver committed the care of one of his teams to a faithful slave for some years. At last, one of the horses sickened and died. While the slave was burying the faithful animal, the other horse came across the field and stood by, watching the operation as a silent mourner. The master said to the slave: 'I believe Dick loved Billy.' Instantly the slave replied: 'Course he did, massa; why, they pulled together for twenty years.' It is the 'pulling together' we need."

925. "Almost every man likes to do large things. He likes the limelight. Put his picture in the paper, with a word of praise, and he'll serve you. Give him the uppermost seat at the feast, and he will never be absent. And he would even fight our battles against foreign foes if you will make an officer of him. His soul delighteth in large things, but it scorneth little ones. What a mistake this is! In the battle of Santiago, when Cervera's fleet was destroyed, the work was done, not by the twelve-inch guns, but by the smaller ones. The large guns only landed two shots, but the small ones many. The 'Brooklyn' had nothing but five-inch guns, and she fought, in turn, every one of Cervera's ships, and it was her small, rapid-fire guns that did the work. How like this is the church. We feel fitted for great deeds, and we stand with our thirteen-inch guns ready for service, and others, content to do anything for God, win souls for Him. Remember that nothing, however small in the eyes of men, is small in God's eyes, when done in His name, and for His glory."

926. Some years ago I was preaching in an American city. Among my audience I noticed a young lawyer whom I knew,

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and at the close of the meeting I made my way down to where he was sitting, stepped up to him and said: "Good evening. Are you a Christian?" "Yes," he said, "I consider myself a Christian." "Are you bringing others to Christ?" I asked. "No, sir, I am not," replied he; "that is not my business, it's yours. I am called to practise law; you are called to preach." I opened my Bible to Acts 8:4, and said: "Will you please read what the word of God says about it?" He read: "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." "Oh, but those were the apostles," he objected. I said: "Will you be kind enough to read the first verse: 'And they were all scattered abroad . . . except the apostles.'" He had nothing more to say; what could he say? Your great Captain's command is: "Go out and make disciples." Are you doing it?
—*Dr. Torrey.*

927. Grace must not be like the proverbial Dutchman's anchor; when it came to blow very hard he had a beautiful anchor at home. Some people's religion is of that kind. I know a man who has great power over his temper, except when his temper is on, and then he has no power over it. I have heard of people who have advised generous things, and when the generosity is needed, then the pocket is very tightly buttoned. We need to have grace in action, grace in appreciation; not only to know what to be, but to be what we ought to be.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

928. There is scarcely any work in which Christians are called upon to engage greater than the effort to annihilate the drink curse. Whilst in Australia, Mr. Tennyson Smith, temperance lecturer, produced a piece of calico thirty-six feet long on which were pasted newspaper cuttings of murders, suicides, and various tragedies in Great Britain in two weeks caused by the drink—directly.

929. "Professing Christians are sometimes to be found working for the wrong cause. A young man of rare talent, who had been an earnest labourer for the cause of temperance, inherited tendencies to drink. He had striven to banish the traffic as a protection to himself, as well as his fellows, who, like him, were

easily subject to temptation. At last he fell under the awful power of drink, and died of delirium tremens. Just a short time before his death he became calm and rational. To his pastor he said: 'You know how it has been with me. I have tried to be sober and to live a Christian life. I have failed; my appetite was too strong, and the temptation was too great. There is no help for me now. I am dying, and going to hell, but I have one request to make of you. I want you to get a copy of the names of those members of our church who signed a petition for a license to be given to that traffic which has been my destroyer, and place it on my breast when I am put into my coffin, for I wish to offer it at the judgment-seat as one reason why I am lost.'

930. "I was once," said Sam Jones, "called into the home of a widow, presumably upon her death-bed. I went up to her room, talked and prayed with her. She told me her story. 'My husband, dying, left me with five small children—boys. God knows of my struggle to rear them, and keep want from the door. God knows they grew up innocent and full of promise until they fell victims of the temptation to drink. Now they are hopeless. They love me, and yet, dying as I am, night after night they stagger home and carouse in the room below! O God! I cannot die happy, and leave them thus.' Then," said Jones, "I knew that mother was dying of heart trouble—of a broken heart. I went out to a near-by hardware store and secured five new revolvers. I called the boys about the dying mother's bed. We knelt and I prayed, in my prayer touching the tender memories of innocent youth until their eyes rained tears. As we arose from our knees, I said: 'Now, men, stand around this bed: two on either side, you at the foot. Each of you take a revolver, and when I give you the command, fire straight at the heart of your old mother.' 'My God, no!' they cried in chorus; 'we won't murder mother!' Then," said Jones, "I enforced my lesson. I said: 'This would be infinite kindness compared with your prolonged debauch, as night after night you five sons tramp again and again over this already crushed and bleeding heart.' The lesson went home. Reformation came. Hope flickered and beamed, and the mother's health slowly but surely crept back again."

WORRY

931. There is no harm in looking ahead, but it is unwise to try to lift next week's burdens. One needs to distinguish between "forelooking and foreboding." There is nothing wrong in looking ahead, but foreboding, needless anxiety in regard to the future, is not only useless but injurious, besides evidencing lack of implicit trust in our heavenly Father's care for His creatures. Worry looks tremblingly ahead, but never accelerates, and always hinders the speed in life's race.

Yet many drag through life weighted with all sorts of needless cares, and never in their element unless looking for still more trouble. They are always watching for clouds, and are never content to bask in the sunshine.

Paul has a word concerning the sin of worrying. "In nothing be anxious" (Phil. 4:6). The reason is because we are in God's world, and He is able and willing to take care of all His creatures. "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28). The present trouble must be acknowledged to be divinely permitted, and a sure guarantee of guidance through future trials.

The spirit of worry should be crowded out by the inflowing of "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." That alone will ensure complete victory.

932. It is not hardships that are the wearing work of life. It is anxiety of heart and mind; it is the fretting, carking cares of deep solicitude—one sorrow, one deep, corroding anxiety, will wear deeper furrows in a cheek and brow than ten campaigns can do. One day's suspense will exhaust more, and leave the cheek paler, than a week's fasting.—*F. W. Robertson.*

933. Edward Everett Hale says of worrying: "Never bear more than one kind of trouble at once." In giving a young friend this advice, he added: "Some people bear all three kinds—all they have had, all they have now, and all they expect to have."

934. No man ever sank under the burden of the day. It is when to-morrow's burden is added that the weight is more

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than a man can bear. . . . God begs us to leave the future to Him.—*C. Macdonald.*

935. During a world-tour, I noticed, more than once, the following beautiful verse hanging above the bed:

“Sleep sweetly within this quiet room,
My guest, whoe’er thou art;
And let no mournful yesterdays
Disturb thy peaceful heart;
Nor let to-morrow fright thy breast
With dreams of coming ill;
Thy Maker is thy changeless Friend,
His love surrounds thee still.”

936. John Wesley said: “I dare not fret any more than I dare curse and swear.”

937. A. R. Main writes of a modern poetess who tells of a traveller who, struggling up a mountain with a heavy burden, suddenly saw a huge obstacle in the path. He first begged it to move, next he angrily abused it, then he knelt down and entreated it. Finally he settled it:

“I took my hat, I took my stick,
My load I settled fair;
I approached that awful incubus
With an absent-minded air,
And I walked directly through him,
As if he wasn’t there.”

938. “I am told that engineers on the railway dislike moonlight nights because they are all the time battling with shadows. There is a shadow across the track just ahead. It is like a man, or a horse, or a tree; but it is not; it is only the shadow of something extended across the rails. We spend a lot of our time fighting shadows.”

939. We worry about the future. We load ourselves with all sorts of needless things about the future. In the fairy tale of “Alice Through a Looking-glass” we are told that the white knight, starting on a journey, anxiously provided himself for the journey with a great variety of hampering odds and ends—with a mouse-trap, in case he was troubled by mice at night; with a beehive, in case he came across a swarm of bees, etc.—*Wayland Hoyt.*

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940. Out of the midst of a great pressure of work, with a body tired out, Dr. Charles F. Deems, the busy pastor of the Church of the Strangers in New York City, wrote these lines years ago:

"The world is wide, in time and tide,
And God is quick; then, *do not hurry*;
That man is blest who *does his best*,
And leaves the rest; then, *do not worry*."

—S. D. Gordon.

941. The same writer says: "I heard of a society whose purpose it was to cure worry. There were *thirty-seven* rules, I think. It would worry some of us a good bit to memorise any such length of instruction as that. The remedy seems to be on a high shelf; and in standing up on a chair and reaching there is some danger that the chair may tip over, and the last state not be an improvement on the first. But there are three very simple rules, easy to follow, and they will never fail. They are not my rules—that is, not of my making—or I might not speak so positively. They are given by the blessed Holy Spirit, through our dear old friend Paul. In Philippians 4, verses 6 and 7, are the words that contain the rules: 'In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.' . . . We must be anxious for nothing. In other words, *don't* worry. Thankful for everything; and prayerful about everything."

942. A man says to his agent: "I want you to go on a business tour for me. First go to Buffalo. Here is the money, and here are the directions that you need while there. Thence go to Cleveland, and there you will find remittances and further directions. When you get to Cincinnati you will find other remittances and other directions. At St. Louis you will find others; and at New Orleans still others." "But," says the agent, "suppose when I get to Cleveland, or any of the other places, I should not find anything?" He is so afraid that he will not, that he asks the man to give him money and directions for the whole tour before he starts. "No," says the man, "it will be sufficient if you have the money and directions you need for

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each place when you get to it: and when you do get to it you will find them there." So God sends us in the same way. He says: "Here is your duty for to-day, and the means with which to do it. To-morrow you will find remittances and further directions; next week you will find other remittances and other directions; next month you will find others; and next year still others. I will be with you at all times, and will see that you have strength for every emergency."—*H. W. Beecher.*

943. "A friend was calling upon another and began pouring out a stream of personal woes. This had gone wrong, and this, and this other would go wrong. Everything was wrong. And her friend, who knew her quite well, had her get a pencil and paper and asked her if possibly there was *one* thing for which she could be thankful. Reluctantly from her lips came the mention of some particular thing for which she felt indeed grateful. Then a second was gradually recalled, and then more. And as the train of thought grew on her she suddenly asked: 'Why was I so despondent when I came in? Everything seems so changed.'"

944. John Newton says: "Sometimes I compare the troubles we have to undergo in the course of a year to a great bundle of faggots far too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole at once. He mercifully unties the bundles, and gives us first one stick, which we are able to carry to-day, and then another, which we are able to carry to-morrow, and so on. This we can easily manage, if we would only take the burden appointed for us each day; but we choose to increase our trouble by carrying yesterday's stock over again to-day, and adding to-morrow's burden before we are required to bear it."

WORSHIP

945. In Old Testament times worship was local. "But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes, to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come" (Deut. 12:5). "And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there

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I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat" (Ex. 25:21, 22). "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord" (Ps. 122:3, 4). Only where the ark was, and the altar, and officiating high priest, could God be worshipped.

Our Lord taught that worship is not confined to time or place: "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. . . . But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and truth" (John 4:21, 23). "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Paul wrote to "all that call upon the name of the Lord in every place" (1 Cor. 1:2).

Whilst worship in all places is acceptable to God, it is His wish that we should worship Him in the assembly of His people. There, devout souls may thrust aside the world's cares for a season, enjoying fellowship with each other, and, whilst singing praises, offering united petitions, reading and expounding the word of life, may feel that the Lord is truly in their midst.

Christians should forsake not the assembling of themselves together, "as the custom of some is" (Heb. 10:25).

946. Oh! must it not be a sight at which angels rejoice—to see crowds of worshippers pressing into the courts of the Lord? Rank is, or ought to be, forgotten; disagreements are laid aside; the world thrust back for a season. We meet as brethren, to pray together, to pray for each other, to kindle the flame of devotion in one another's hearts, to confess our sins as with one voice, to put up our petitions together to God's throne, to sing the praises of Him whom we love, and to receive that message from heaven which God is pleased to send us. Let us pray heartily; respond heartily; sing heartily; receive the Word into our souls heartily.—*Oxenden*.

947. "Prayer-meeting and lecture as usual on Wednesday evening, in the lecture-room. Dear brethren, I urge you all to attend the weekly meetings. 'Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.'" Some of the "dear brethren" departed

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themselves in this way: Brother A. *thought it looked like rain*, and concluded that his family, including himself, of course, had better remain at home. On Thursday evening it was raining very hard, and the same brother hired a carriage, and took his whole family to the Academy of Music, to hear M. Agassiz lecture on "The Intelligence of the Lobster." Brother B. *thought he was too tired to go*, so he stayed at home and worked at the sledge he had promised to make for Billy. Sister C. *thought the pavements were too slippery*. It would be very dangerous for her to venture out. I saw her, next morning, going downstreet to get her old bonnet "done up." She had an old pair of stockings drawn over her shoes. Three-fourths of the members stayed at home. God was at the prayer-meeting. The pastor was there, and God blessed them. The persons who stayed at home were each represented by a vacant seat. God doesn't bless empty seats.—*United Presbyterian*.

948. "When the time for commencing public worship has been fixed by the united action or general assent of a Christian congregation, every member of that congregation is obligated to conform to that arrangement; and whoever, through indolence or indifference, is behind time, sins against God, his fellow-worshippers, and his own good. A tardy courtier offends his prince—how much more a tardy worshipper his God. To be behind time at a business appointment is to infringe upon the time and rights of others, and never more so than when that business is worshipping God."

949. That Christian coolly insults God who needlessly composes himself to slumber, or neglects to participate in worship, in God's house. If you were one of a delegation to the royal court for the presentation of a petition, and were admitted into the presence of the king, would you think it becoming to the dignity of the royal presence to neglect the business in hand, and to wander about the apartment curiously, while your chairman was presenting the petition in your name? Yet that which would be only a breach of etiquette there is a much graver offense in the house of God. A listless and wandering mind, roving like fool's eyes, in the temple of worship, is a most insolent indignity to the King of kings.—*Phelps*.

950. "A new student had come to the university, and some time after his arrival he called to see Professor Tholuck. After awhile the professor asked him where he went to church. 'Oh,' said he, 'I do not attend preaching. Instead of confining myself to the four walls of a building, I go out into the green fields and under the lofty arches of the forest trees. I listen to the singing of the birds and the countless melodies of God's creatures, where everything that has breath praises the Lord.' The professor allowed him to go on in this strain for awhile, and when he had finished, he quietly asked him: 'But what do you do when it rains?'"

951. No request abides and impresses like that of a dying friend. A mother, just passing out into the world beyond, with her cold, white hand clasps the hand of her wayward son, and with her last words says: "My son, give your heart to God!" How can he, however wayward and wicked, ever get away from this request? The Saviour, only a little while before He passed away, speaking of the Supper, said: "Do this in remembrance of me." And from that sad hour till now His friends have sacredly heeded this dying request.—*M. M. Davis.*

ZEAL

952. Zeal is wonderfully helpful to the cause of Christ, if not allowed to leap over the boundaries of love and knowledge.

Of our Lord it was prophesied: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (Ps. 69:9). Paul writes of the need of being "zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:14). The Laodiceans are instructed to "be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev. 3:19).

Zeal must be actuated by love. Frequently it is promoted by lower motives. The genuine enthusiast seeks not to destroy, but to save. He has no desire to call fire from heaven to consume those who differ from him. He is active in the dissemination of the "truth in love," and performance of deeds of kindness.

Zeal must be "according to knowledge" (Rom. 10:2). There is much that passes for zeal which cannot be classed under this category. Ignorance of Scripture teaching, lack of tact and common sense often defeat the object in view.

There are countless instances in which false zeal has hindered

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instead of helped, whilst enthusiasm which is dominated by love, and directed by knowledge, always has been, and ever will be, mightily used of God. The apostles and disciples of the first churches were imitators of our Lord, and furnish excellent examples of enthusiasm. They suffered death, but were not defeated. There is no defeat for those who bravely and uncompromisingly contend for the faith, and zealously do God's will.

953. Dogs seldom bark at a man that ambles a softly fair pace; but if he once sets spurs to his horse and falls to galloping—though his errand be of importance, and to the court perhaps—then they bark and fly at him; and thus they do at the moon, not so much because she shines, for that they often see, but because, by reason of the clouds hurried under by the winds, she seems to run faster than ordinary. And thus if any man do but pluck up his spirits in God's service, and run the way of His commandments, it is Jehu's furious march presently, and he shall meet with many a scoff by the way, that runneth with more speed than ordinary.—*J. Spencer.*

954. Zeal is like a locomotive, continually propelled by the power of steam; zeal not according to knowledge is like a train off the lines. Some Christians are like a locomotive standing still and letting off steam: they are all blow, much voice, but no progress.—*Jos. Pittman.*

955. When Whitefield preached at Oxford, so strong an impression was made upon his hearers that complaint was made to the bishop that fifteen persons had been driven mad by the sermon. The good man replied that he wished the madness might not be forgotten before the next Sunday.—*Southey.*

956. A gentleman once visited a hospital where were sheltered the victims of a terrible malady. After passing through the wards, and noticing the heartrending condition of the patients, he said to the nurse who accompanied him: "You must have a great deal of the enthusiasm of humanity to keep you in such a place as this?" "Enthusiasm of humanity, sir," said the nurse: "that motive would not keep me here for a single day—it is the love of Christ constraineth me."

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957. In "Epoch-makers of Modern Missions," Archibald McLean says that Charles Simeon had the picture of Henry Martyn in his study. He used to say: "There is that blessed man looking down on me and saying: 'Be earnest; don't trifle.'" And bowing to the picture, he said: "I won't trifle; I will be earnest." That picture has said the same thing to every generation of Cambridge students since.

958. Rowland Hill said: "Because I am in earnest, men call me a fanatic, but I am not: mine are words of truth and soberness. I once saw a gravel-pit fall in, and bury three human beings alive. I shouted so loud for help that I was heard a mile off; help came, and two of the poor sufferers were rescued. No one called me a fanatic then; and when I see eternal destruction ready to fall upon poor sinners, and about to entomb them irrecoverably in an eternal mass of woe, and call aloud on them to escape, shall I be called a fanatic now?"

959. "I heard of a vessel in port, and a sailor was in the rigging, when a gale caught him off his guard and blew him, fortunately, over the deck into the water. The line was on the water when he came up, and the old sailor made for the rope and grasped it with seemingly a vice-like hold, and the captain, anxious to test the muscle of his seaman, said in fun: 'Boys, see what grip he has.' They began drawing the sailor up the side of the ship; at last they reached out and caught his arms and helped him on to the deck, but the sailor lay as if dazed for a time, holding fast to the life-line. The captain said: 'Man, you are safe; let the line go.' But the sailor did not answer. They applied restoratives, and then the men called out: 'John, let go the line; you are safe on the ship.' The old sailor's lips moved, and he said: 'Captain, I c-a-n-t let 'er go; I g-r-i-p-p-e-d 'er for my life!' It was more than four hours before the ligaments and muscles relaxed sufficiently to allow him to let the line go, so tightly had he grasped it. Men, in God's name, let me beseech you to grasp the life-line to-night, and GRIP it for your LIFE!"

960. A traveller was journeying in the darkness of night along a road that led to a deep and rapid river, which, swollen

by sudden rains, was chafing and roaring within its precipitous banks. The bridge that crossed the stream had been swept away by the torrent, but he knew it not. A man met him, and, after enquiring whither he was bound, said to him in an indifferent way: "Are you aware that the bridge is gone?" "No," was the answer; "why do you think so?" "Oh, I heard such a report this afternoon, and, though I am not certain about it, you had better not proceed." Deceived by the hesitating and undecided manner in which the information was given, the traveller pushed onward in the way of death. Soon another, meeting him, cried out in consternation: "Sir, sir, the bridge is gone!" "Oh, yes," replied the wayfarer, "some one told me that story a little distance back, but from the careless tone with which he told it, I am sure it is an idle tale." "Oh, it is true, it is true!" exclaimed the other. "I know the bridge is gone, for I barely escaped being carried away with it myself. Danger is before you and you must not go on." And, in the excitement of his feelings, he grasped him by the hands, by the arms, by the clothes, and besought him not to rush upon manifest destruction. Convinced by the earnest voice, the earnest eyes, the earnest gestures, the traveller turned back, and was saved. The intelligence in both cases was the same, but the manner of its conveyance in the one gave it an air of a fable, in the other an air of truth.—*Christian Work.*

961. "The artist Correggio, when young, saw a painting by Raphael. Long and ardently did the thoughtful boy gaze on that picture. His soul drank in its beauty, as flowers drink moisture from the mist. He waked to the consciousness of artistic power. Burning with the enthusiasm of enkindled genius, the blood rushing to his brow, and the fire flashing from his eyes, he cried out: 'I, also, am a painter.' That conviction carried him through his initial studies; it blended the colours on his palette; it guided his pencil; it shone on his canvas—until the glorious Titian, on witnessing his productions, exclaimed: 'Were I not Titian, I would wish to be Correggio.'"

962. "My brother and I," said President Lincoln, "were once ploughing corn on a Kentucky farm. I was driving the horse, and he was holding the plough. The horse was lazy, but on one

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occasion rushed across the field, so that I, with my long legs, could scarcely keep pace with him. I found an enormous chin-fly fastened on him, and knocked it off. My brother asked me what I did that for. I told him I didn't want the old horse bitten in that way. 'Why,' said my brother, '*that's all that made him go.*'"

963. Once, when Alexander Duff was making an earnest appeal for workers, he fainted and was carried out. On recovering consciousness he asked where he was and how he came there. On ascertaining the facts, he said: "I must go back and finish." He was told that he would probably die if he did. He said that would make no difference. He stood before the audience and continued to plead for men. There being no response, he told the fathers and mothers present that if they had no sons to give, he would have them know that there was one old man who would go to India and spend there what remained of life to him and be buried in India. He said, in substance: "Wherever I wander, and wherever I stay, my heart is still in India—in deep sympathy with its multitudinous inhabitants, and in earnest longing for their highest welfare in time and eternity."—*Archibald McLean*.

964. Two ships were aground at London Bridge. The proprietors of one sent for a hundred horses, and pulled it to pieces; the proprietors of the other waited for the tide, and with sails and rudder directed it as they pleased.—*Charles Simeon*.

965. I once heard of the driver of a dray saying: "That horse, sir, would pull till it pulled down St. Paul's, if I told it to."—*Benjamin Waugh*.

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